



CADET TROOPERS.

WEST POINT IN THE EARLY SIXTIES

WITH INCIDENTS OF THE WAR

BY

JOSEPH PEARSON FARLEY
U. S. ARMY.



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TO THE GRADUATES OF THE U. S. MILITARY ACADEMY

“Dead Upon the Field of Honor”

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INTRODUCTION

THE writer's attention was lately attracted to the photogravure plates of the Military Academy published in annual reports of its superintendent, Col. Albert L. Mills, and to those contained in reports of the Board of Visitors to that institution. This suggested a possibly happy thought, that if he could obtain the privilege of republishing these plates,* together with certain others of a similar kind, the whole might be combined so as to make an acceptable book.

It will be clear to the reader, as he progresses, that no effort has been made to write a history of the Academy and its methods; that while some space has been devoted to the condition of affairs at West Point during the early months of the Civil War, the writer has followed up with a few episodes and reminiscences of that war.

The pages of Boynton's History of West Point and Cullum's Biographical Register of the Graduates of the United States Military Academy have however been turned over, to ascertain what matter contained therein could properly be abridged and presented here in the form of introduction.

*The writer is greatly indebted to Colonel Mills for the use of special plates, and to Pach Bros. of New York, and Stoddard of Glens Falls, as well as to the Detroit Photo. Co., for copyright privileges. The campaigning shown in several plates is a new feature in the course of instruction at the Academy.

As shown by the Journal of the House of Representatives, 3 and 4, Congress, 7, George Washington inquired, as long ago as 1793, "Whether a material feature in the improvement of the system of military defense ought not to be to afford an opportunity for study of those branches of the art which can scarcely ever be attained by practice alone."*

Thomas Jefferson further states: "That when the preparation of this (the above) message was discussed in the Cabinet, the President mentioned a Military Academy as one of the topics which should be introduced, and that he himself raised the objection, that there was no clause in the Constitution which warranted

* "What shall I say of the graduates of West Point?"

"The records of the War Department, the tablets in our national cemeteries, and the tributes to the valor and the patriotism of the graduates of West Point found in every American History speak for these men, who, doing everything and claiming little, have led, instructed, and maintained the reputation of our Army for a century."—*General Alexander Stuart Webb.*

"The greatest war of modern times, after four years' conflict, had sifted thoroughly the military talent of the land, the commanders-in-chief of the opposing armies and the commanders of every separate army in the field were graduates of this Academy; that during this war it gave the country twenty Federal army commanders, thirty-six corps and fifty-four division commanders, all of the rank of major-general, in addition to a large number of brigade and regimental commanders; that the chiefs of the active corps of the general staff in Washington who organized the great armies of the war were also West Pointers, and that on the opposing side a very large majority of the officers in chief command, as well as the President of the Confederate States, were all educated at the Academy. This condition of affairs was not the result of an initial advantage of position, but the fruit of experience on the battlefields of a long and terrible struggle."—*Report of the Board of Visitors to the U. S. Military Academy, 1901.*

such an establishment; but nevertheless the above sentence was incorporated in the message and was again the subject of special deliberation."

The reply of Washington was, that he would recommend nothing prohibited by the Constitution, but if it were doubtful, he was so impressed with the necessity of the measure that he would refer it to Congress and let them decide for themselves whether the Constitution authorizes it or not.*

From this it appears that Washington himself entertained doubts respecting the constitutionality of establishing and maintaining a Military Academy in this country, and it is well known that Jefferson was equally opposed to such institution for the same reason, but in the end he gave active support to legislative measures for creating and afterward promoting its efficiency.

By the Act of March 16, 1802, the Military Peace Establishment of the United States Army was fixed.

The Act authorized the President to organize and establish a Corps of Engineers, to consist of five officers and ten cadets, and provided that it should be stationed at West Point, in the State of New York, and should constitute a Military Academy. The Academy, with ten cadets present, was formally opened July 4th, the year of the Act.

Subsequent Acts of Congress, in 1803 and 1808, authorized forty cadets from the artillery, twenty from the light artillery, one hundred from the infantry,

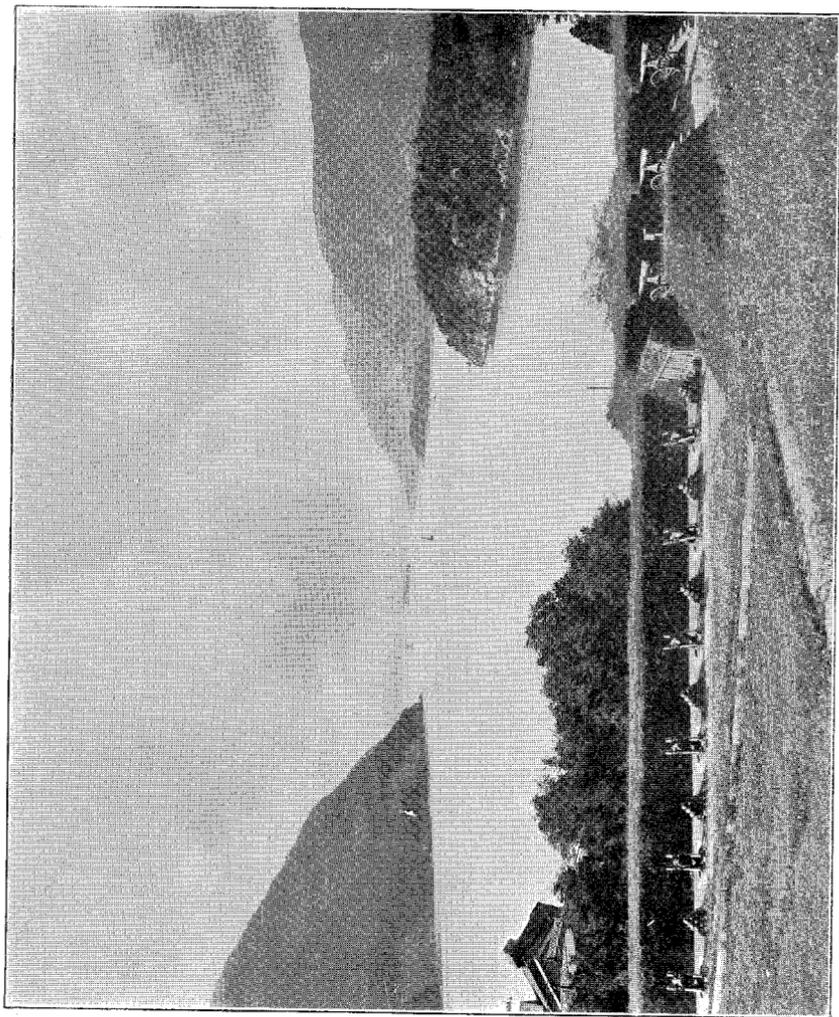
* It has been ascertained that George Washington was the first to propose the creation and maintenance of a Military Academy, and "the memory and the name of Washington shall shed an eternal glory on the spot."

sixteen from the cavalry, and twenty from the riflemen; but few of these were appointed, and no provision at the Academy was made for them. In 1810 the Academy was deprived of nearly all means of instruction, and officers and cadets had difficulty in obtaining their pay. During 1811 and a part of 1812, although war was imminent, the Academy was without officers or cadets. To include this time, seventy-one cadets had been graduated; they had entered without mental or physical examination; at all ages, from 12 to 34, and at any time of the year.

By Act of Congress of April 29, 1812, the Academy was reorganized. The provisions of this Act established the general principles upon which the Military Academy has since been conducted and controlled; a more adequate corps of professors was authorized; a maximum of two hundred and fifty cadets was fixed, and the age and the mental requisites for admission were prescribed.

From the date of its establishment until August 28, 1866, the superintendents of the Military Academy were always selected from the Corps of Engineers, and it was not until Col. Thomas G. Pitcher, Forty-fourth United States Infantry, was assigned, under legislative enactment, to that position in the year 1866, that the original method of selection was abrogated. Col.* Jonathan Williams, head of the Corps of Engineers, the first superintendent, under date March 14, 1808, reported that the institution was in point of fact first established at West Point in the year 1801, under direction of a

* Local rank of Colonel.



WEST POINT FROM SIEGE BATTERY.

private citizen (George Barron), at a time however when it was a mere mathematical school for the few cadets then in service. The Act of 1802 provided that the Corps of Engineers should be stationed at West Point and constitute a Military Academy. The Act of Congress of April 29, 1812, laid the Military Academy on a broader basis. Proceedings in the House of Representatives showed that public sentiment was strongly and almost unanimously in favor of the perpetuity of this method of providing for future military institutions. At this time there was still contention as to the constitutionality of the institution, and motions were made in Congress to abolish the Military Academy, to pay off the cadets, and discharge them from service. As Boynton remarks, "It is the fate of every institution of National importance, which is created and sustained by our Government, to undergo periodical probing and investigation, and in this there was no escape for the Military Academy. Boards of whatever shade or complexion their membership may have been politically, have insensibly lost their predilections or prejudices, which have melted away and have been converted into the strongest approbation in the crucibles of personal inquiry and conscientious judgment. No institution in the land has undergone such an ordeal of investigations from boards and congressional committees, and none seeks closer examination and scrutiny."

During the administration of Col. Jonathan Williams the number of cadets was restricted to fifty—forty from the artillery and ten from the engineers.

Col. Joseph G. Swift succeeded Col. Williams on July 31, 1812, and annual boards of visitors were at this time provided for by law. Under date September 4, 1816, the uniform, worn to this day by the cadets, was prescribed. Whatever of reputation the Academy may possess throughout our country and abroad dates from the advent of Brevet Major Sylvanus Thayer, of the Corps of Engineers, as its superintendent, on July 28, 1817. "This officer held office until relieved on July 1, 1833, a period of sixteen years, and the institution has followed so exactly on the lines marked out for it by this distinguished officer, to the present day, that it requires an intimate knowledge of its inner workings to discover changes incident to a more modern system of instruction." At that time the cadets engaged to serve for a period of eight years, as they do at present — four years as cadets and four years as commissioned officers after graduation. Col. Rene E. De Russy succeeded Colonel Thayer on July 1, 1833, and he again was succeeded by Major Richard Delafield on September 31, 1838. Major Delafield, as Boynton tells us, "Did much to improve the Academy, being endowed with administrative abilities of a high order and an inflexible resolution to maintain discipline. His early efforts were directed toward defining and establishing the boundaries of the public lands at West Point, and removing all unauthorized individuals who had settled thereon." Until very lately,* and under enactment of law, but one cadet was appointed from each congressional district. This law, dated March

* Since the Spanish-American War.

1, 1843, required that the appointee should be a *bona fide* resident of the district from which appointed. The President was at the same time empowered to appoint ten cadets annually *at large*, this to provide for the sons of Army and Navy officers who had no permanent residence or claims for appointment in congressional districts. The restrictions as to appointments at large were not mandatory, but the President usually appointed sons of officers of the Army and Navy, and particularly sons of officers who had been killed in battle or who had died in the service. "Major Delafield was succeeded, April 15, 1845, by Capt. Henry Brewerton, and this officer greatly improved the Academy in many ways. The brilliant success of the American Army in Mexico, untarnished by a single defeat or doubtful action, furnished convincing evidence that the Academy was doing its work well in the training of its officers."

"When the conflicting voices of partisan spirits are hushed, and the rancorous jealousies of envious and malignant disputants are consigned to oblivion, posterity will gaze upon the pile of strange artillery, and still stranger-looking flags, and their mutilated flag-staffs, deposited at the Military Academy in 1849, and read with them these words of the great soldier, Winfield Scott, Commanding General of the Army of the United States, 'I give it as my fixed opinion that but for our graduated cadets the war between the United States and Mexico might, and probably would, have lasted four or five years, with, in its first half, more defeats than victories falling to our share; whereas in less than two campaigns we conquered a great country

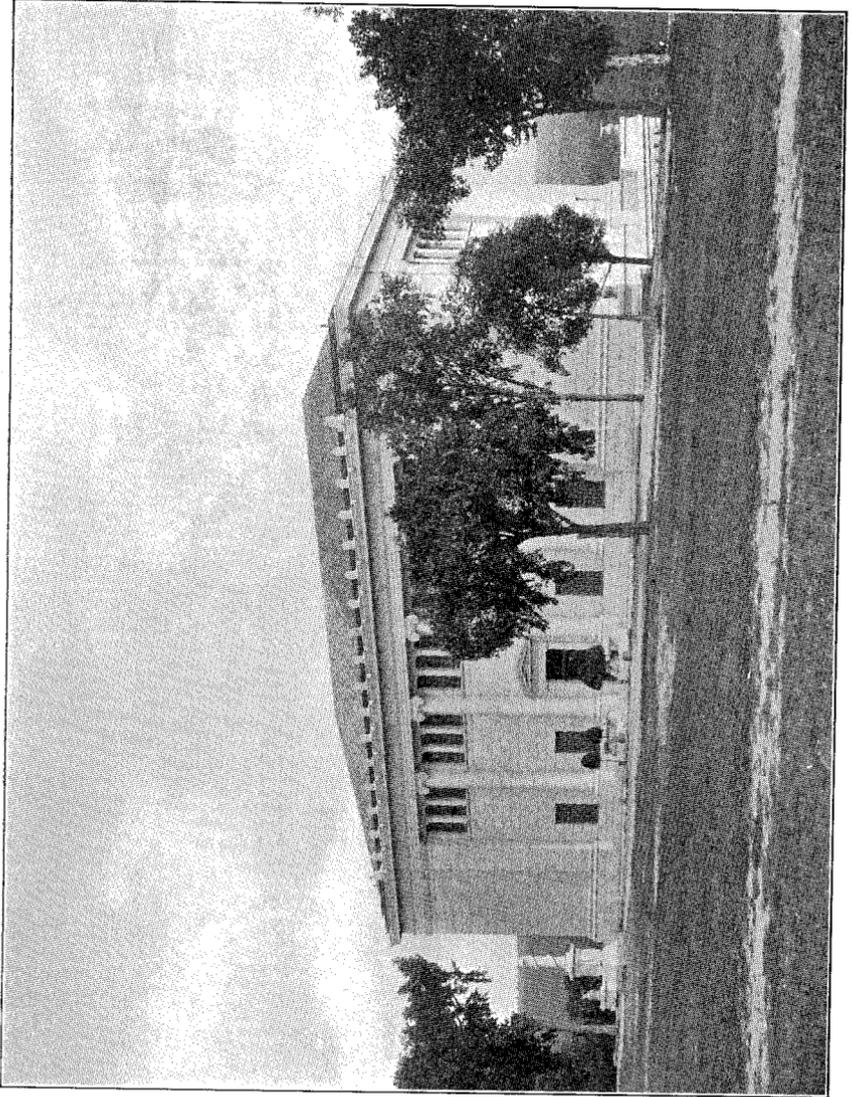
and a peace, without loss of a single battle or skirmish.' ”

The General further says:

“ As under Providence it is mainly to the Military Academy that the United States became indebted for the brilliant achievements and other memorable victories in the same war, I have a lively pleasure in tendering the seven trophies (semi-national) to the mother of so many soldiers and patriots.”

In 1852 Capt. and Brvt. Col. Robert E. Lee, who had distinguished himself as aide-de-camp to General Scott in the Mexican War, and who later became the General Commanding the Confederate Armies operating in Virginia, succeeded Captain Brewerton as superintendent, and “ under his administration the course of study was changed by order of the Secretary of War to include a period of five instead of four years, and the new riding hall was completed. This greatly increased the opportunities for cavalry exercise and interest in this department.”

Colonel Lee was succeeded by Col. J. G. Barnard on April 1, 1855, Lee at the time having been selected by Jefferson Davis, the then Secretary of War, as one of the colonels of the two new cavalry regiments; or rather, Colonel Lee was assigned to the Second Cavalry, this assignment being incident to certain transfers in perfecting the new organizations; and this required that he should leave the Military Academy under the then existing regulations, which made it obligatory that none other than the officers of the engineers should hold this position. Colonel Lee was assigned in Texas to the command of a larger number of troops than had ever before been assembled in the United



MEMORIAL HALL.

States since the Mexican War; and his experience with this command, coupled with his earlier experience in the Mexican War, stood him in good stead when he became the Commanding General of the Confederate Army.

From Cullum's Register of Graduates, Vol. III, the following extracts have been made: "I do not think we claim that West Point can in four years accomplish miracles and utterly remold the character of its pupils, but it has in the past and will make in the future men more useful in the details of life, more reliable and faithful to their trusts, whether private or public, and more national in their attributes and aspirations, than any other system of education hitherto tried; and these results are cheaply attained by our national Military Academy." — *W. T. Sherman*.

"Aside from its value to the graduates of the Military Academy, as containing a condensed and reliable summary of their military and civil history after graduating, it must be a source of just pride to them to see there recorded indisputable evidence of as much loyalty among the alumni of our Alma Mater as can be met with among any other class of American citizens.

"I venture unhesitatingly to say also that no other institution of learning in the country has contributed more to the advancement of science and literature than the Military Academy at West Point." — *G. H. Thomas*.

"It is unfortunately true that many forgot the flag under which they were educated, to follow false gods. But who were the leaders of this treason but the hon-

ored and trusted in the land, filling, or who had filled, the highest places in the Government — Senators, Representatives, Members of the Cabinet, Foreign Ministers, Judges of United States courts, and even those who had been elected by the people to fill the highest offices in their gift? Was it then a greater crime for graduates of our national Academy to forsake their country than for the highest officials in every branch of the Government — executive, legislative, and judicial — who, from the seceding States, almost to a man, joined the Rebel standard?"

* * * * *

“The statistics show that the West Point part of the Army has been by far the most loyal branch of the public service; that nearly four-fifths* of its graduate officers remained faithful; that one-half of those from the South stood firm by the Stars and Stripes; and in the battles for the Union, that one-fifth of those engaged laid down their lives, more than one-third, and probably one-half, were wounded, and the survivors can point with manly pride to their services here recorded for the preservation of the Nation.

“With these facts stated, the Academy needs no eulogy, and can securely rest her honor on her loyal children, and her efficiency on her turbulent children as well.” — *North American Review*.

“Let us take one class as an example. The class of 1841 had fifty-two graduates. Of these, twenty-five are dead. Fourteen were killed in battle and ten died in

*This will be a surprise to some readers.

service. Forty-three — more than four-fifths — were engaged in battles. The first one on the class list was engaged in thirteen important battles; the next in twelve; the fifth, having served at Bull Run and Chancellorsville, died of wounds; the tenth was killed at the battle of Molino del Rey; the eleventh (Lyon) was killed at the battle of Wilson's Creek; the twelfth was killed near Churubusco, Mexico; the thirteenth died at Vera Cruz; the sixteenth was killed at the battle of Stone River; the twenty-second died near Corinth, Miss., in the Army pursuing Beauregard; the twenty-third (Brannan) was engaged in fifteen battles; the twenty-sixth (Reynolds) was killed at Gettysburg; the thirty-third died of wounds received at Molino del Rey; the thirty-eighth died of wounds received at Sharpsburg; the thirty-ninth was killed at Spottsylvania; the forty-eighth was killed at Chepultepec; the fiftieth died of wounds at Mexico; the fifty-second died of wounds at Mexico. This class had sixteen generals, of whom Lyon, Reynolds, Wright, Tower, and Brannan were a part; two were killed in the Rebel service — the Garnetts.

“ I have taken this class,* as an example, to show both what services were rendered by the graduates of West Point and what admirable materials for history are here. No man can write history of any value without a most exact reference to events and dates; nor can the history of the United States, in the last sixty years, be written well without consulting very closely the records of West Point.” — *A veteran observer.*

* The class of 1841, as well as the classes of 1861, sustained greater losses on the field of battle than those of any other dates.

“The Academy however had only the cold shoulder of the administration which in the meantime had come into power, and its early years were not very prosperous. The result of this policy was, that when the second war with England broke out, there were but sixty-five West Point men in the service. In the course of that war the record of the first two years shows in the Army little but bad generalship, blunders, and defeats. Americans however learn war rapidly in the field, and the last campaigns were more creditable to our arms. In these campaigns West Point men took a conspicuous part. Of those in active service, one-sixth were killed, one-twelfth were wounded, and one-fifth of those who survived received one or more brevets for gallantry and meritorious conduct.

“During the thirty years which followed the close of this war, the officers of the Regular Army were employed in fighting the Indians, a training which, although useful, was yet very incomplete. At the breaking out of the war with Mexico, five hundred graduates of the Academy were in the service, and many others re-entered it from the occupations of civil life. In this war the utility of military education was strikingly proved. In less than a year and a half our small Army in Mexico won thirty battles, took forty thousand prisoners, a thousand cannon, besides an immense amount of small arms and munitions of war, ten fortified places, and the capital of the enemy, and acquired territory for the country which now yields every year a revenue equal to three times the whole cost of the contest. General Scott, himself not a West Point graduate, thus

summed up the lessons of this war: 'I give it as my fixed opinion that but for our graduated cadets, the war between the United States and Mexico might, and probably would, have lasted some four or five years, within its first half more defeats than victories falling to our share.'

"These two brilliant campaigns gave an extravagant fame to the Military Academy, which, at the breaking out of the Rebellion, worked to its injury. The people expected impossibilities of it. In General Cullum's words, 'The youthful graduates, who perhaps had never commanded a larger force than a company, or a battalion, were expected at once to lead vast armies of undisciplined troops through unknown morasses and tangled wildernesses to assured victory.' It was inevitable that the popular expectation should be disappointed, and that West Point should thereupon be as extravagantly decried as it had been extravagantly lauded. In this reaction of public feeling, the fact that the Rebel armies were led by West Point men was argued with pertinacity as an additional argument against the usefulness of the Academy.

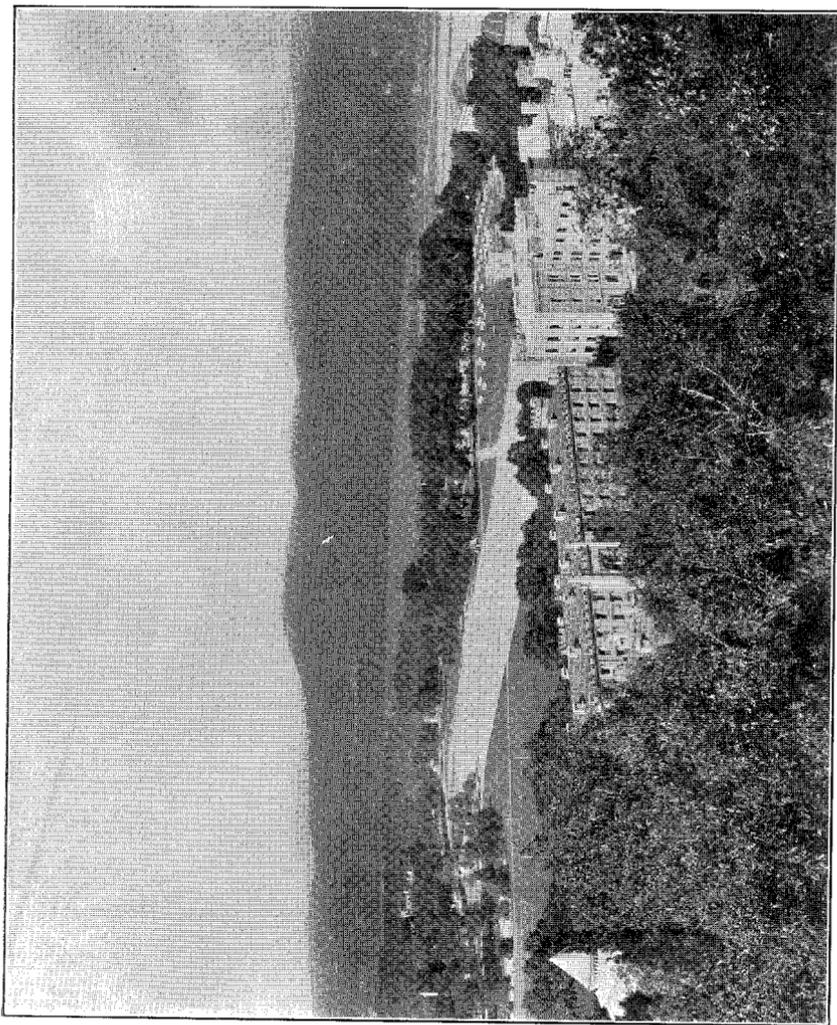
"But as the war went on West Point men steadily replaced the officers appointed from civil life in the higher commands. Men who before had hard experience only in petty war, learned with wonderful facility to practice grand strategy, and successfully conduct campaigns of unparalleled difficulty and importance. Grant and Sherman reached their proper places. The annals of the last years of the war justify General Cullum's boast that the 'cost of educating the whole of the seceding graduates was not more than was saved

by the military knowledge of loyal graduates *on every day of the Rebellion.*'

"The West Point Academy has given the country between two and three thousand educated officers; has procured for our Army a world-wide reputation; and, at the breaking out of the Rebellion, it kept nearly one-half its Southern graduates loyal to their country; yet it has never received, in any single year, an appropriation larger than is required to maintain a squadron of cavalry; and has not cost the country, from 1802 to the present time, a greater sum than was spent in any *single week* of the last years of the Rebellion.

* * * * *

"This leads us to speak of the loyalty of West Point graduates. It is a common notion that they were under peculiar obligations to the United States Government. This mistake is well exposed by General Cullum, who argues unanswerably that they were educated by the country for its benefit, and not for their own; and that the event has proved the economy of the Academy, even in dollars and cents. This is clear from a view which the author only hints at. Every cadet is enlisted to serve four years after graduating. In these four years, most of them — all those in staff corps — have responsibilities and perform duties that in commercial life would command pay enough higher than they receive to amply compensate for the cost of their education. It is difficult to see that the crime of a Southern graduate, in rebelling, is any greater than that of any other Government official.



WEST POINT FROM "OLD FORT PUT."

“But are we not assuming a little too much in taking the disloyalty of West Point for granted? One of the saddest experiences of the war was the observation of the deep-seated, firm conviction in the minds of many of the most high-minded, religious Southern men and women, and growing from their first consciousness in the minds of their children, that their cause was a righteous one, and that they were resisting an unholy war of invasion; one of the pleasantest sights in a general view, but without much comfort for our side, immediate or future, was that of the active, cordial sympathy of the Southern women with the men — even more general and efficient than with us. The question was not brought home to us, and it is hard for us to form an idea of the strength and suffering required for a kindly, right-minded man to give up the dearest ties of earth for a point of abstract morality enveloped in a thick cloud of casuistry, and to become a reproach and an outcast in the land of his fathers.” — *New York Evening Post*.

The following are the superintendents of the United States Military Academy with the local rank of colonel, following Col. Robert E. Lee: John G. Barnard, one and one-half years; Richard Delafield, four and one-half years; Peter G. T. Beauregard, five days; Richard Delafield, one month; Alexander H. Bowman, three and one-fourth years; Zealous B. Tower, two months; George W. Cullum, two years; Thomas G. Pitcher, five years; Thomas H. Ruger, five years; Brig.-Gen. John M. Schofield, four and one-half years; Brig.-Gen. Oliver O. Howard, one and one-half years; Wesley Merritt,

five years; John G. Parke, two years; John M. Wilson, three and one-half years; Oswald H. Ernst, five and one-half years, and Albert L. Mills.*

No material changes in the post of West Point have taken place until within recent years. Under an Act of Congress of 1900 the Corps of Cadets has been considerably increased by the appointment of two from each State at large and thirty from the United States at large. These, with the increase coming under the new apportionment of members of Congress, make the maximum number five hundred and eleven.

The memorial hall and gymnasium and a new academic building have been completed. The old library and philosophical academy has also been entirely renovated and the whole building converted into a new and modern library. The cadet mess hall has been enlarged by taking in the officers' quarters at its north end and the officers' mess at the south end, and some fourteen or more sets of officers' quarters have been built.

Roads are now being constructed at considerable expenditure of money and labor — one from the south dock to the south gate and guardhouse direct, and another from the Old Kinsley House to the site of the old cadet hospital. On the latter road new officers' quarters are being built to supersede the old sets, which will be torn down as rapidly as this work can be done.

We have said nothing of the professorships, but they of course were created to correspond with the course of study in all the subjects taught at that institution; and these professors, who held prominent positions,

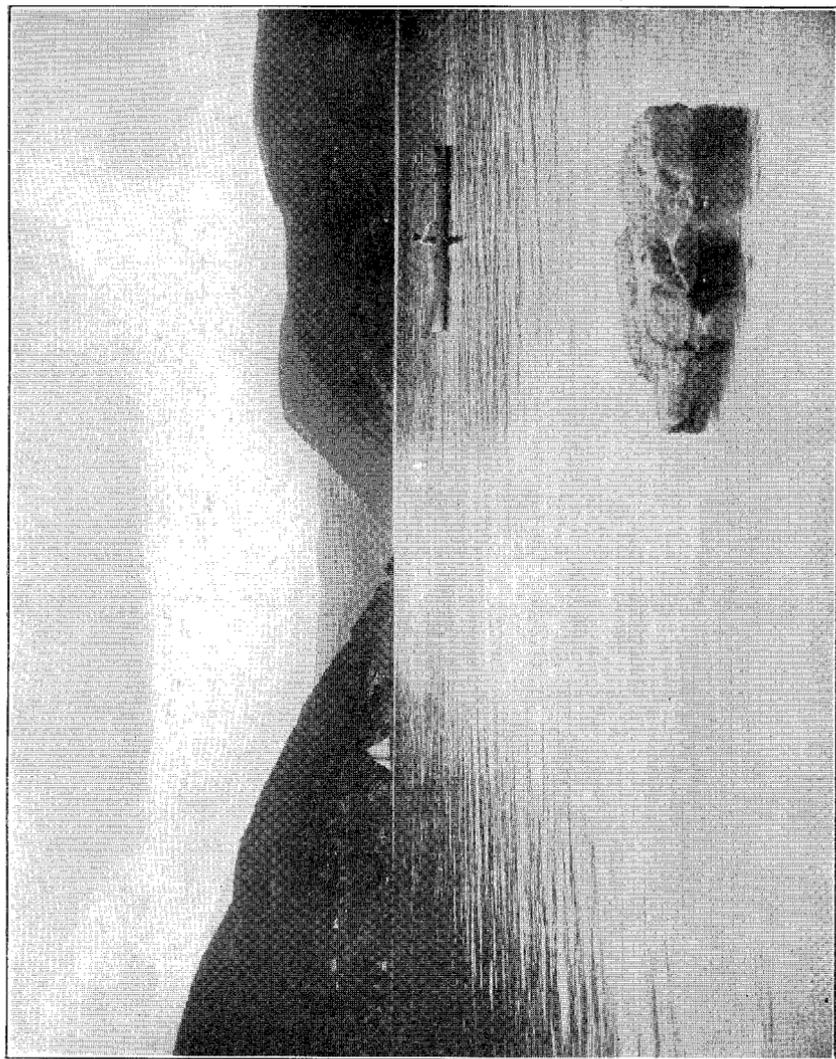
* The years are approximately correct.

and were in most instances appointed from the Army, were assisted by instructors detailed for periods of four years. These instructors were all commissioned officers of the Army and were assigned, upon the application of the professors of the several departments, from the list of those who had distinguished themselves at the Academy, or shown special aptitude in the branch of study for which they were required.

During the Civil War and the Spanish-American War the selections were, from necessity, less restricted, as it was necessary to accommodate the assignments at West Point to conform to the contingencies of service. It is well here to note that in spite of what has been said respecting the large proportion of cadets who resigned and went South at the outbreak of the Civil War, there were two hundred and seventy-eight cadets in the battalion at the time; eighty-six of this number were from the Southern States; sixty-five resigned and joined the Confederate Army, and twenty-one remained loyal and continued their studies in the junior classes at the Academy.

It is the purpose of the present authorities, so the superintendent, Col. A. L. Mills, informs the writer, to demolish the West Point Hotel, and, Congress consenting, to erect a new hotel at a point near the Old Kinsley House on the south toward Buttermilk Falls. The site of the present hotel will be converted into a park and a second trophy point. The present cadet barracks are to be renovated and sinks and bathing facilities provided in the basement. This will relieve the area of the old boiler-house and present sinks. Additional cadet barracks must be constructed and they

will be placed on the line of officers' quarters north from the gymnasium. The second academic building will take the place of the old chapel. A new chapel will be built on the hillside in rear of the gymnasium. There will also be constructed a new and larger riding hall on the site of the present riding hall, stables, and cavalry barracks. New cavalry barracks and stables, also artillery barracks and stables will be built at the south end of the post against the foothills, and the ground to the east converted into a new and enlarged cavalry and artillery drill-ground. The old cavalry drill-ground is to be sodded over and thrown into the plain. An officers' club and mess building is now being constructed south of memorial hall. The Cemetery has been greatly enlarged and the plan for its improvement, which is being carried out, will make it one of the most beautiful and attractive spots at the point. For all of the proposed measures an appropriation of five million dollars has been made.



THE GATE OF THE HIGHLANDS.

They are heard along the Highland passes of the Hudson; they echo around "Redoubt Hill," against the sides of "Old Fort Put," and thence run onward and upward to "Cro' Nest's" rock-ribbed height.

CHAPTER I

“PER ANGUSTA AD AUGUSTA”

OF the boys of our day at the Academy, few, very few, are now living.

The others have answered their final roll call; and when Sherman so earnestly advised that all officers of the Army should see the play “Shenandoah,” he little realized how few there were to accept his advice, of those best able to appreciate the play.

The writer’s class had certainly an eventful experience, and but five remain to *encore* the play. Our class ring (June, 1861) bore inscribed “PER ANGUSTA AD AUGUSTA,” and the design upon it was even more appropriate than the motto.

Cut in sardonix from black to white, the seal shows an arm with sword in hand, interposed between the guns of a fort and the flag they are firing on.

The bell has rung up the curtain upon “Shenandoah;” the scene of the first act of mimic warfare reveals two comrades — lieutenants in the same regiment, classmates at West Point, always classmates.

The scene is laid in the city of Charleston, South Carolina, and the men are natives of opposing sections in the coming strife — the one from South Carolina, the other from New York State.

The sound of a distant shot startles the audience, separating, as it does, for a time, the young soldiers, and perhaps for a lesser time their sisters.

Here we have the key to the situation; and Sherman knew it right well, when he sent us "Old boys" "to take in the show."

For the few of us living that heard it, this faint and far-off boom of the gun fired against Sumter has yet its reverberations.

They are heard along the highland passes of the Hudson. They echo around "Redoubt Hill," against the sides of "Old Fort Put.," and thence roll onward and upward to "Cro' Nest's" rock-ribbed height.

Word had come from Anderson — Robert Anderson, the hero of the hour — that he had defended Fort Sumter until his quarters were entirely burned, the main gates destroyed by fire, the gorge walls impaired, the magazine surrounded by flames, and his scanty supplies all but exhausted.

He accepted the terms of evacuation offered by Beauregard prior to the commencement of hostilities, and marched out of the fort with colors flying and drums beating, bringing away his company property, and saluting his flag with fifty guns.

On April 13, 1861, General Beauregard wrote: "Apprised that you desire the privilege of saluting your flag on retiring, I cheerfully concede it, in consideration of the gallantry with which you have defended the place under your charge."

To those of us who were close observers (as cadets ever are) of our officer-instructors at the Academy —

men who in earlier years had led the columns of assault up the Heights of Chapultepec, and drawn sword on the fields of Buena Vista, Molino del Rey, and Palo Alto — evidence of their distress was not wanting in this hour of our country's peril.

The June class of 1861, which reported at the Military Academy in 1857, one hundred and eight strong, musters on the Army list to-day but five. Of the missing through forty years or more, the record is incomplete; of others we here shall speak.

O'Rorke, the leader of the class, and Custer, the last of scholastic file-closers, each killed at the head of his regiment upon the field of battle — the former cut down in early youth at Gettysburg, and the latter massacred, together with seven hundred of his white-horse troopers at Little Big Horn River, Montana.*

“Custer, ever at the head of his regiment,” and Custer (without disparagement) “ever at the foot of his class.” Of O'Rorke, more anon. But let us for a moment examine into this phenomenal scholastic performance of Cadet Custer, leading the “immortals”

* A horse known as Comanche, the only survivor of the bloody tragedy of the Little Big Horn, June 25, 1876, received kind treatment from every member of the Seventh Cavalry to the end of his life.

The commanding officer of “Company L” was directed by regimental orders to see that “a special and comfortable stall was fitted up for him, and that he should not be ridden by any person whatever, under any circumstances, nor be put to any kind of work.”

Upon all occasions of ceremony (of mounted regimental formation), “Comanche,” saddled, bridled, and draped in mourning, was led by a mounted trooper of “Company I” and paraded with the regiment.

in a class of one hundred — again of eighty, of sixty, then of fifty, and finally marker of a class graduating with but thirty-four members.

Glorious old boy! Dare-devil of the class! How well did you hang on to the tail end — always ahead of the deficient, — foot of a class of thirty-four and head of a class of seventy-four.

This reminds us of dear “*Old Michie*,” himself an honor man, but one who always made light of “class standing.” “How is Dennis getting along?” “Very well; very well; *head in football*,” was the professor’s usual reply. “Dennis Mahan Michie,” the younger of his two promising sons, both dead in the same year, and nothing left for the father but the deep and heartfelt sympathy of every living graduate of our Alma Mater, of every officer of the United States Army. One more “dead upon the field of honor.”

“In athletics Dennis Michie’s enthusiasm knew no bounds; he introduced football into the Military and Naval Academies, and trained up an awkward team until it could defeat the team of the sister Academy at Annapolis.”

In the period of which we write, so memorable in our country’s history, it was presumed that our class would graduate with fifty-six members; but before many months — nay; we may say, weeks — had elapsed (reckoning from the first month of 1861) twenty-two of this number had responded to the call from home: “Prepare to resign! Resign! A commission awaits

you in the Confederate Army. First come, first served.”

Ropes, of Massachusetts, an impartial historian, and among the first of military writers, enunciates this principle. We do not quote him literally, but in words to this effect:

Should a Virginian find himself in accord with action taken by the authorities of the State of South Carolina, a State, we shall say, already “out of the Union,” he could not enlist with the forces of that seceded State, *his own State being as yet in the Union*, without deservedly being classed a traitor. If, on the other hand, his own State had severed her bond with the Union and he, with others, had been an earnest Unionist, with efforts against secession unavailing, then honor and duty should compel him to cast in his lot with *his own State*.

This same view was maintained by the instructor in law at the Academy, one who himself hailed from the far South. He did not however practice what he preached; since, in spite of all his teachings, he remained throughout the war a loyal man, and was justly awarded the highest honor, that of Chief of his Corps.

But all this is changed now. The oath administered to the cadets, and with great impressiveness, has in it the ring of “*The Union right or wrong.*”*

*“I, A. B., do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and bear true allegiance to the National Government; that I will maintain and defend the sovereignty of the United States, paramount to any and all allegiance, sovereignty, or fealty I may owe to any State, county, or country whatsoever; and that I will at all times obey the legal orders of my superior offi-

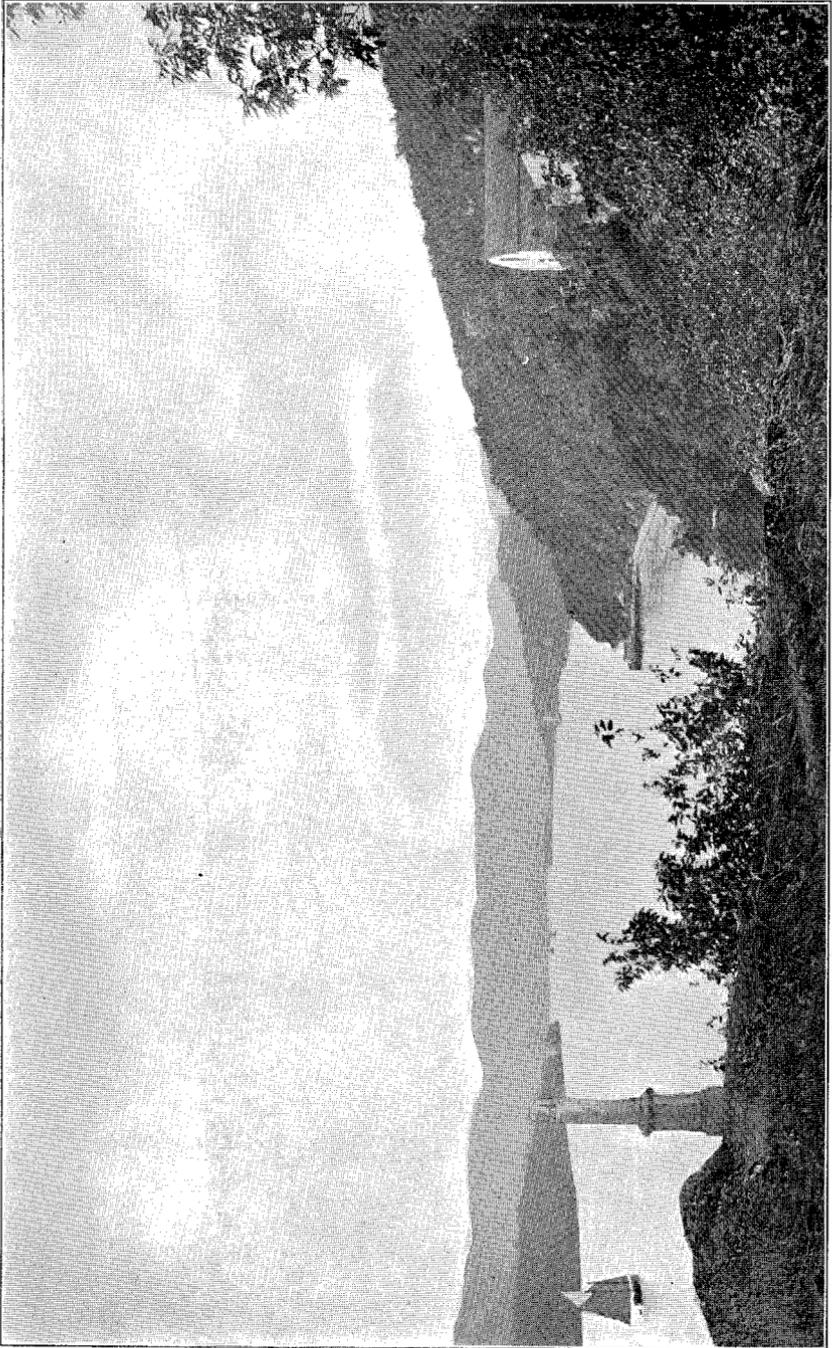
Word came to the Military Academy that commissions in the Confederate Army awaited all boys from the South. The writer's roommate and classmate, a cadet from the same State (Louisiana) as the then superintendent, Beauregard,* visited the Major for counsel and advice. This man whom Fate had decreed to receive the sword of Anderson, and the surrender of Sumter, a man destined to become a prominent leader in the Confederate cause, hesitated to advise the young men from the South further than to suggest that so long as he himself remained in the Regular Army of the United States he thought they should all do so.

For many years it was a custom at the Military Academy when cadets severed relations with the institution after failure at an examination, or resigned for proper cause, for the first captain of the Corps, the cadet in charge of the battalion during meal hour in the mess hall, to grant to the departing cadets permission to bring the battalion to attention for parting words.

At this special hour in our country's history, of which we write, the practice had a deeper significance than ever before; we may thus instance one of many similar cases, that of the first sergeant of "A" Company, prospective first captain of the Corps of Cadets. His voice rang out clear and strong: "Battalion, attention! Good-bye, boys! God bless you all!" His citizen's

cers, and the rules and articles governing the armies of the United States."

* Appointed superintendent, January 23, 1861, by Secretary of War Floyd and relieved five days thereafter by Secretary of War Holt.



DADE'S MONUMENT.

attire warned us that he was about to leave the post, and upon permission being granted, the members of his class bore him upon their shoulders to the old south dock, where the final parting scene from this man, our favorite classmate, was one never to be forgotten. This was the first instance of a Southern boy leaving for home — in this case, far away in southern Alabama, to cast in his lot with his State and against the Union.

His classmates retraced their steps from wharf to plain, each one grimly pondering on what remained in store for him.

Experience had taught that the Regular Army, in Mexico, in Florida, or as the vanguard of civilization in the far West, was the fighting element of our land. No thought had at the time been given to the volunteer auxiliary yet to be, and therefore it seemed that the conflict ahead promised to be one of friend against friend, classmate against classmate. Between the men of the several sections of the country there was no bitterness manifest, nothing but expressions of sorrow and disappointment.

There was but one unfortunate exception to this. The field music of the guard, after having passed in review before the officer of the day, struck up the lively air of “Yankee Doodle.” The officer of the guard, a cadet from the extreme southwest who had tendered his resignation, ordered the musicians to cease playing.

This action was most bitterly resented by the men from the North, and, fortunately for all, repudiated at once by the cadets from the South, who were as yet with us in the ranks.

The June class of 1861 had many vicissitudes during its term at the Academy. Entering, as it did, upon a five years' course, inaugurated in 1854, the Secretary of War, in October, 1858, directed a change back to the four years' term. In April, 1859, the same authority again changed the course to five years. This, as those will understand who are familiar with the system at the Military Academy, produced great confusion, constant reversals of decisions, and total disregard of the recommendations of the Academic Board.

Again, upon the outbreak of the Rebellion, the then first class, which had been at the Academy four years and ten months, was graduated about two months before the expected time. This caused another change in the course of studies, the junior class a second time returning from five to a four-year limit, and graduating on the date originally prescribed for the class which had been its immediate senior at the Academy. Thus it was that the course of engineering (civil and military), law, and the science of ordnance and gunnery was for us restricted to exceedingly narrow limits.

At that time there was a decided and well-founded opinion that the course of English study should be enlarged so as to admit of the introduction of such subjects as declamation, composition, military law, moral science, history of philosophy, rhetoric, and that last, though not least, there should be included a course of logic.

The writer met Gen. Samuel Breck, of the Adjutant-General's Department, a short time ago, and learned from him that nothing had ever given him

more satisfaction than the instruction of the two graduating classes of 1861 in the before-mentioned subjects, profitable alike to himself and to the cadets. A singular feature in the course of logic, and one worthy of remark, was the manner in which the class appeared to undergo a sort of *bouleversement*, men high up in the first section in all other ethical subjects passing by transfer to the “immortals.”

And now a word for moral science; an amusing incident of the course. Cadet Dimick, having entered the recitation-room with his section and before the arrival of the instructor, proceeded forthwith to use his textbook as a football, shouting as he did so, “The virtues are what we are, the duties are what we do; what we are is more important than what we do. Therefore the virtues are more important than the duties.” All this with resultant smashing of a window pane at the moment when the instructor entered. “Mr. Dimick,” this officer said, “make it your *duty* to pick up that glass,” and when this feat had been successfully performed, “Now, sir,” he said, “go to the blackboard and discuss the subject of *virtue*.” Unmindful of the distinction between *tactical* and *moral* instructors, the order, “Go to your quarters in arrest, Mr. Dimick,” was anticipated, the usual reproof for pranks of this kind.

As indicative of the conditions existing throughout the country at the period of which we write, the class which had been graduated early in May, 1861, when purchasing side arms and revolvers in New York city, excited so much distrust and suspicion that these men,

about to be commissioned as officers of the Regular Army, while en route to Washington City, were arrested at the Philadelphia depot, and marched before a civil magistrate.

Of the succeeding class, but five from the South remained at the Academy to graduate in June. Twenty-two from that section of the country had previously resigned in order to secure commissions in the Confederate Army, and of the graduated members from the South, three later on resigned and joined the Confederacy.

The color sergeant of the Cadet Battalion at the V. M. I., Lexington, Va., "The West Point of the South," answers at roll calls, "Dead on the field of honor,"* for the names of certain absentees. This custom will, it is greatly to be hoped, continue so long as the institution is maintained.

The Confederate Army, engaged at New Market, in the valley of the Shenandoah by Sheridan, had been reinforced by the Virginia Military Institute Battalion

* *Theophile Carot de la Tour d'Auvergne*: The first grenadier of France; died, when serving in the army under Moreau, pierced through the heart by a lance at the siege of Oberhausen. Each soldier contributed one day's pay to purchase a silver urn in which his heart was inclosed. At every roll call the soldier carrying the urn answered, "Mort au champ d'honneur," when the hero's name was called.

A monument was erected to his memory by General Moreau, and a bronze statue stands for his memory in Carhaix, Finisterre. The urn containing his heart was first deposited in the Pantheon, but later was adjudged to the family of Kersaize who claimed it.

of striplings, and, as incident to the condition of the times, far below the usual age. Several of their number were killed in action, and this corps of boy soldiers will for all time treasure the names of their dead as a sacred heritage.

This is a story of West Point, but it is also a story of the young soldiers of our Republic. And we are glad to know that the school, which is the pride of the Virginian, the pride of the South, has been designated “The West Point of the South.”

May that school in the far-away Shenandoah Valley go on with its good work; and since the Military Academy proper falls short in supplying the necessary commissioned officers for our Army, West Point looks to the “V. M. I.” for assistance. Glad indeed are we all to find a large representation of graduates of this our sister Academy* among the commissioned officers of the Regular Army.

* The wounds left by the great Civil War, incomparably the greatest war of modern times, have healed; and its memories are now priceless heritages of honor alike to the North and to the South. The devotion, the self-sacrifice, the steadfast resolution and lofty daring, the high devotion to the right as each man saw it, whether Northerner or Southerner — all these qualities of the men and women of the early sixties now shine luminous and brilliant before our eyes, while the mists of anger and hatred that once dimmed them have passed away forever.

All of us, North and South, can glory alike in the valor of the men who wore the blue and of the men who wore the gray. Those were iron times, and only iron men could fight to its terrible finish the giant struggle between the hosts of Grant and Lee. To us of the present day, and to our children and children’s children, the valiant deeds, the high endeavor and abnegation of self shown in that struggle by those who took part therein will remain for ever-

In the course of this writing reference has been made to O'Rorke and Custer, but the names of others who were graduated from the Academy in the early months of that eventful year in which began our civil strife dignify the pages of history. Cross at Franklin, Kingsbury at Antietam, Kirby at Chancellorsville, Hazlett at Gettysburg, McQuesten at Opequan, Dutton at Bermuda Hundred, Cushing at Gettysburg, Woodruff at Gettysburg, Dimick at Chancellorsville, Brightly in the Wilderness. "Dead (all) on the field of honor."

Cushing at Gettysburg! What shall we say of him? First, a brother of Cushing, of the Navy — Cushing, of Albemarle fame. Thrice wounded, and mortally so, before he would relinquish command of his battery.

Of this gallant artillerist let his lieutenant (now Major Frederick Füger) speak:

"When the enemy was within four hundred yards Battery 'A' fired with single charges of canister. At that time Cushing was wounded in the right shoulder, and within a few seconds afterward he was wounded in the lower part of the abdomen, a very severe and painful wound. After this he became very ill and suffered frightfully. In answer to protestations that he should leave the field, 'No,' he said 'I stay here, fight

more to mark the level to which we in our turn must rise whenever the hour of the Nation's need may come.—*President Roosevelt.*

* * * * *

If ever the need comes in the future the past has made abundantly evident the fact that from this time on Northerner and Southerner will in war know only the general desire to strive how each can do the more effective service for the flag of our common country.—*President Roosevelt, Charleston, S. C., April 9, 1902.*

it out, or die in the attempt.’ When the enemy was within two hundred yards double and treble charges of canister were used. These charges opened immense gaps in the Confederate ranks as wide as a company front. Lieutenant Milne, who commanded the right half of the battery, was killed when the enemy had closed to within two hundred yards, and when within one hundred yards Lieutenant Cushing was shot through the mouth and instantly killed.”

The cyclorama of Gettysburg, on exhibit for years in this country, recalls the scene, and has immortalized “The Hero of Gettysburg,” the artist having done well when he gave to Cushing’s battery “the right of the line,” “the post of honor.”

As our thoughts dwell upon these heroes of the Civil War whose names are graven upon the battle monument, let us see what has been done in at least one instance to commemorate the heroes of Indian Wars. Until late years a cenotaph of white Italian marble, bearing a fluted column upon a square base, the latter encircled with stars and supported at the four corners with marble cannon, stood upon a plateau on the river’s bank near Fort Knox. At this time it stands in front of, and not far removed from, Memorial Hall. “Its column is surmounted by an eagle, from whose beak a wreath of laurel depends and entwines the column.

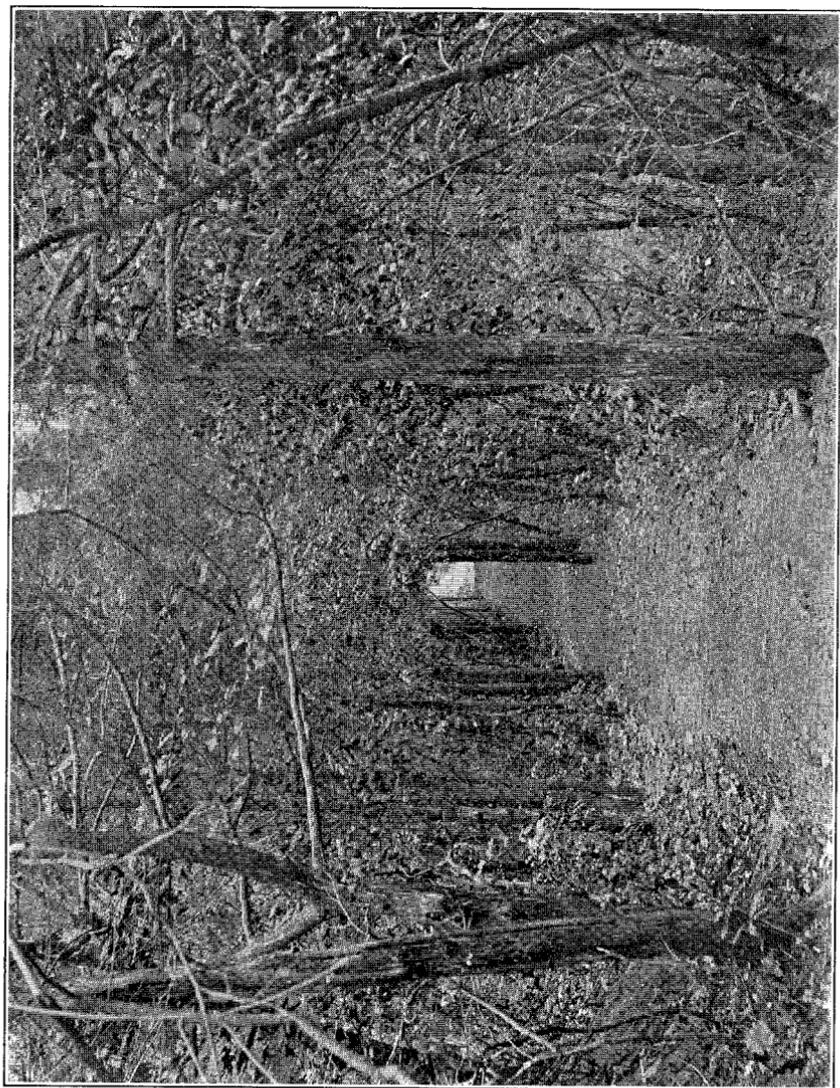
The single inscription,

“Dade
and his Command”

with names and date, convey but little idea of the mournful event which this emblem commemorates.”

The official report of the massacre of Dade's command shows that: "As the Seminole Indians in Florida were reluctant to the proposed emigration west of the Mississippi River, in February, 1835, four companies of artillery were sent from Fort Monroe to Florida. 'C' of the First Artillery, to be later mentioned in this recital, was included in this command. General Clinch had with him at Fort Drade, in November of the same year, six hundred Florida militia, and the four companies of artillery.

"Osceola, the Seminole Chief, and his followers gave much trouble at this time, and brutally murdered a mail carrier, which induced General Clinch to ask for more troops. Frazer's company of the Third and Gardner's of the Second Artillery, under Major Dade, of the Fourth Infantry, arrived on December 23d at Tampa, Florida, in answer to the call for more troops, and started on a march of one hundred miles to join General Clinch at Fort Drade via Fort King. The command, consisting of one hundred and seventeen officers and men, was attacked at the Withlacooche River, on December 28th at 9:30 A. M., by eight hundred Indians and one hundred negroes, and after a desperate engagement of five hours, the entire command was massacred save three men, who were wounded, two of whom effected their escape. On the 29th of December, General Clinch, who was ignorant of the Dade massacre, started from Fort Drade with two regiments of Florida militia and his four companies of artillery and one company of the Fourth Infantry for the Withlacooche River. In crossing the river on December 31st, he was attacked



FLIRTATION WALK — "THE DANGER POINT."

by the same band that had massacred Dade and his command, and was outnumbered three to one. The regular battalion sustained the brunt of the attack and lost four killed and fifty-two wounded.

“As the term of service of the volunteers had nearly expired, General Clinch determined to return to Fort Drade on January 2d, and then it was that he learned of the fate that had befallen Major Dade’s command.

“The two officers last to fall in Dade’s command were Captain Gardner and Lieutenant Basinger. Captain Gardner received five shots before he fell. Lieutenant Basinger then said, ‘Now, my boys, let us do the best we can; I am the only officer left;’ and the firing recommenced. About half-past 2 o’clock he was brought down by a rifle shot in the thigh, and he was afterward cruelly murdered by a negro.”

The Dade monument is the only one at the Point erected to the memory of the heroes of Indian Wars.

There is no monument to the memory of the heroes of the Mexican War. The battle monument which stands at Trophy Point bears the names of all officers of the Regular Army, whether graduates of West Point or not, and also the names of all enlisted men of the Regular Army who were killed in battle during the Civil War. The contribution to the fund for this latter monument was restricted to the officers and soldiers of our service, the contributions being graded according to rank.

From Dade’s monument the walk continues down to Kosciusko’s spring and garden, and thence around the

path, at the base of "Battery Knox," which leads to "Flirtation Walk," and here let us pause, as others always do; 'tis *a point of danger*.

"Peter,"* do you not recall a certain "rapid transit" over the precipice at this point to the frozen river below, and the perilous landing, of at least one of us, in the treetop at the rocky base? Who would have believed that we (the writer and yourself) should be alive to-day to tell the tale; and do you think, "Peter," that we have been preserved for any *worse* fate?

You also remember, do you not, "Peter," that broken chain—the chain that guards the area—and how one of the very same precipitate high-flyers went down, back somersault, and smashed his pasteboard hat quite flat, with attendant and most serious consequences?

Do you know, Peter, that thirty years after that hat-smashing catastrophe the writer visited West Point in company with a friend, and pointed out to him the spot in front of the tower-room where the chain gave way? "One link of that chain was gone, and *wire* replaced the *missing link*."

"Peter" can better vouch for these recitals than can, we think, Fitzhugh Lee, for the story of *his* acrobatic feat. It is said that, heading his runaway horse for "Constitution Hollow," both horse and man landed, top-side up, at its bottom. "Fitz," the first on his legs (always "landing on his feet"), thus addressed

* "Peter" is not a mythical personage; he is a distinguished officer of the Engineer Corps (one of *the five*), Col. Peter C. Hains.

himself to the crestfallen animal: “Now, d—n you, I hope you’ve had enough.”

The mare was the Xantippe of the stables, and “Fitz” had purposely headed her for the hollow “to settle a score” with the old lady.

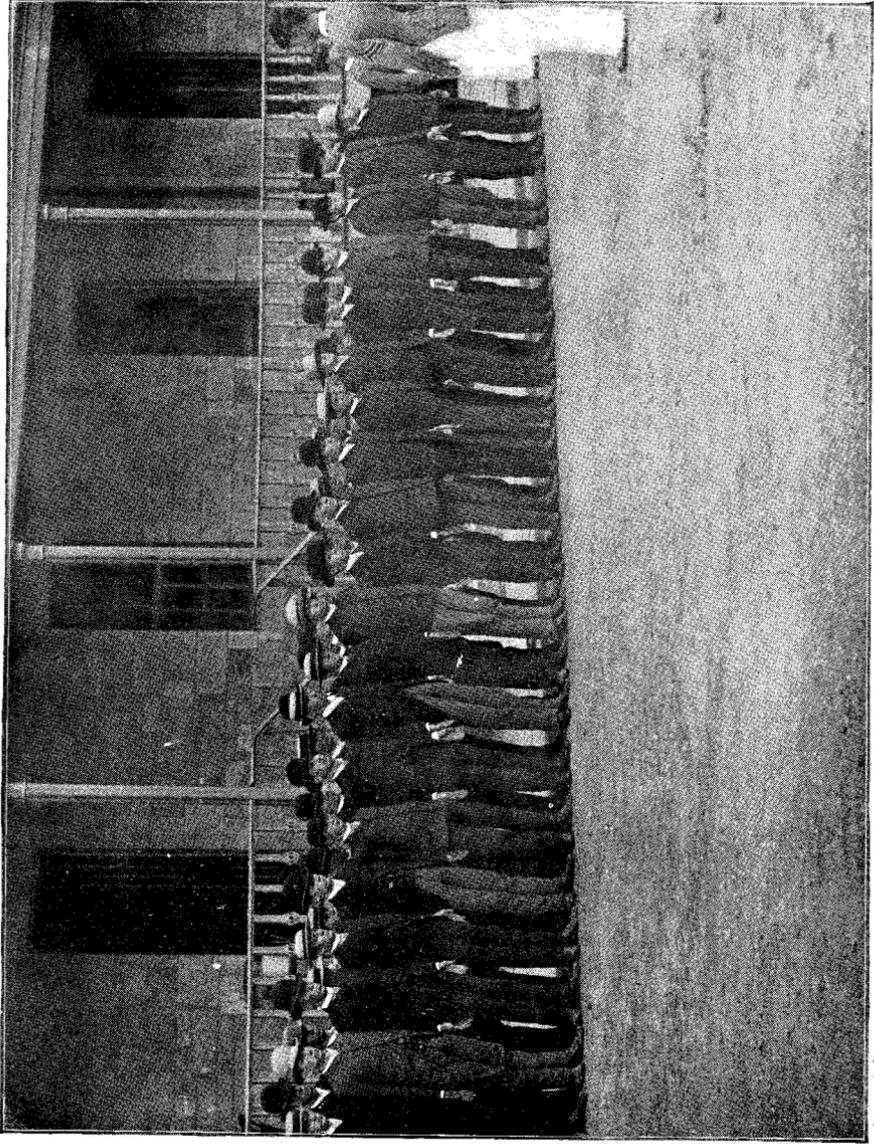
This story follows on the lines of another, where the feat performed was that of horse and man plunging over the most precipitous bank on the Old South Road. The horse, in this case, cushioned the blow and his cadet rider lived to tell the tale.

General Lee himself gives us this, and vouches for its truth: “I remember, in my first class year at West Point, riding a very vicious horse named Quaker, who was so wild that his name was not put in the list of horses to be drawn for by the first class men, and I remember that he ran away with me in a charge on the plain and jumped over the very high hedge which surrounds the hotel, alighting inside the grounds. I have been informed since that no horse at West Point has ever *cleared* that hedge.”

While we are on the lookout for true stories relating to this distinguished soldier, let us see what Maj.-Gen. John Gibbon, U. S. A., has to say* of his meeting General Fitz Lee, at the McLean House, Appomatox County, Va., in April, 1865: “Going to the door, I found Gen. Fitz Lee seated on his horse and looking, as I thought, somewhat uneasy. He had been a cadet under me at West Point, and I had not seen him for years. As I looked at him, a vision of the past came

* Century for May, 1902.

up before me, and I could think only of a little rollicking fellow dressed in cadet gray, whose jolly songs and gay spirits were the life of his class. My salutation of 'Hello, Fitz! Get off and come in,' seemed to put him at his ease at once, and brought him to his feet. He came into the house and told me his story. Before leaving, with a grim humor, he took from his pocket a five-dollar Confederate note, and writing across its face, 'For Mrs. Gibbon, with the compliments of Fitz Lee,' he said, 'Send that to your wife and tell her it's the last cent I have in the world.' "



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CANDIDATES.

Stoddard, Glens Falls, N. Y.

CHAPTER II

PLEBES

THERE are those who know and those who do not know that the art of telling the truth is one high and difficult. The number is very great of those who in all sincerity suppose it to consist in statement of fact — not remembering, the while, that such statement may perfectly well become quite other than truth when time, place and, we may say, quantity are ill chosen or not considered. Few things, also, in the practice of the art, are more satisfactory than the recollection of a wisely-used opportunity to “leave it unsaid;” but in view of the much that is small as well as the much that is great which must be spoken of in order to bring our Alma Mater fairly before the memories of those who know her and the imaginations of those who do not, an opportunity like this, to apologize for apparent trifles, does not seem one that would be best used by leaving the apology unsaid.

West Point jokes, as all should understand, are natives of an exiguous territory — an institution for the education of the young who, in respect of their small share in the advantages of foreign travel, differ not at all from the home-keeping youth alluded to by Valentine of Verona. The world at large is not supplied with

the facts essential to the elucidation of these little attempts and cannot be expected to understand or regard them.

The writer has frequently been asked, "How did you happen to select the military profession, and seek an appointment to the Military Academy?"

In the early fifties all things were primitive in the city of Washington, its population at the time not exceeding eight thousand all told, with but one constable, at "The West End," but this one the terror of the boys.

There were two principal hand fire-engines, the "Union" and the "Franklin," in this section of the city; and the boys of eight years and upward "ran with the engine;" the "Gumballs" with the "Union," the "Enders" with the "Franklin." Oh, ye mothers! the perils of football of the present day are as naught to the "brickbat contests" of our day.

A skirmish of this kind, in rear of the President's Mansion, resulted in the death of a "Gumball," and this had a determining influence in making at least one more soldier. After following this hero to the grave, the writer remarked to his father, That he should like to be buried in that way — *i. e.*, with a brass band and with all the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war." "Well, in that case, my son," the father replied, "you will have to go to West Point."

This "is easier said than done"* in a vast majority of cases, but through the agency of a family "hobby," a simple cane, one which had been presented to the grand-

* See Chapter, West Point Life.

father of the writer by the father of the President, Franklin Pierce, the boy was safely landed at West Point early in the month of June, 1857. Reporting to the post adjutant, he, with two others, was assigned a room in "D" Company division, cadet barracks, always vacated in those days by the "old cadets" in favor of the newcomers, the "plebes."

We were directed by two *very courteous* young gentlemen to the angle of barracks, and a certain room was pointed out as the one containing our furniture.

The greater portion of the morning was consumed in the transfer of this furniture, and just as we were enjoying a breathing spell, an officer, presumably of the tactical department, entered and reproved us severely, directing us to return and carefully replace every article we had removed from *his* room.

It is thought that, if the officer had in this case adopted the tactics of General Grant during the Civil War, the *real* offenders might have come to grief and the poor plebes have escaped from the undoing of the work they had done. As the story runs, several Northern soldiers were talking together one day just before the advance on Corinth. A tall, raw recruit stepped up to them with a bundle of soiled clothes in his hand.

"Do you know where I could get this washing done?" he asked.

Two of the group were practical jokers. A bright thought flashed into their heads, and, as the sequel shows, unfortunately found expression.

"Oh, yes, we know! Just go up there with your

bundle," pointing to the headquarters of General Grant; "you will see a short, stout man" — describing the General — "who does washing. Take your bundle to him."

The recruit thanked them and walked off in the direction indicated.

He gained entrance to headquarters, and stood in the General's presence.

"What can I do for you?" said General Grant.

"I was directed here by a couple of soldiers. They told me that you did washing, and I have a bundle here."

General Grant probably enjoyed the situation, but his imperturbable face did not relax. He simply asked the question: "Could you identify those men again?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well; you shall have the chance."

Turning to an orderly, he directed him to call a guard, go with the recruit to where the jokers were standing ready to enjoy his discomfiture, and let him identify them.

"Take the men to the guardhouse, give them this man's bundle of clothing, and make them wash it thoroughly. See that the work is well done."

The General was obeyed to the letter.*

To add to the complexity of things for that day, just after "call to quarters" in the evening, the sentinel tapped on our door and called out "All right?" The reply not being satisfactory to him, he opened the door

* Canadian Chronicle.

and inquired if any one had answered "All right?" "I did, sir." "Who is room orderly?" "He is, sir." "Why did he not answer?" "Because I did, sir." "Why did you answer?" "I don't know, sir." "Why do you not know?" "I forgot, sir." "Well, young man, don't ever forget again." "Now," said the sentinel, "I inquire, is it all right in this room?" "All right, sir," responded the room orderly. "What is all right?" "Everything is all right, sir." "Is everything all right?" "Yes, sir." "Is that basin all right?" "No, sir." "Is that pillow all right?" "No, sir." "Is that candle-box all right?" "No, sir." "Do you not know, young man," the sentinel said, "that the rules and articles of war require that you should be tried by court-martial and dismissed the service for trifling with a sentinel on post in this manner? In time of war the sentence would be death."

We have been asked if this "rubbing-it-in" on the plebes is usual at the Military Academy; and the party of inquiring mind remarks that, if so, it must have an amazingly good effect. We are confirmed by his observation in an idea previously entertained that *the chronicling of such episodes, "small beer" though they be*, is as well calculated as anything can be, to give a true idea of inside life at West Point.

On the day that the Corps of Cadets marched into camp, the adjutant brought the battalion to attention in the mess hall at the supper hour and directed the first class to call at the quartermaster's tent at 7 o'clock to receive its allowance of stationery, and the new cadets to call at 7:30 P. M. for their allowance.

We had been well supplied with brooms, dustpans, washbasins, buckets, blankets, etc., but charges for these articles were always entered upon our passbooks. This time, and for the first time, something was to be had for nothing — *an allowance*.

All of us were on hand at the appointed hour, and besieged the quartermaster's tent in force.

There was evidently something "in the wind" which the "plebes" neither understood nor appreciated; the sentinels shouting vociferously "Corporal of the Guard, No. 6; Corporal of the Guard, No. 7; Corporal of the Guard, No. 8." The reason for this became manifest so soon as the sergeant of the guard appeared upon the ground accompanied by his patrol. "New cadets fall in!" was the command, and away we were marched as prisoners of war, *but without our allowance of stationery*.

As this was "the first night in camp," many of us had been treated to the toboggan process and later on in the stillness of the midnight hour a tent here and there might be seen to sink slowly to the ground, the canvas walls enshrouding its occupants, who, like phantoms in white and pink, crawled out from under, as does the early worm.

A very unusual circumstance occurred some days after "the first day of the plebes on guard."

It was seen from the sentry posts, that the cadet battalion, in returning from breakfast at the mess hall, was halted on the cavalry plain and countermarched. The manœuvre was not understood, but later it appeared that this was done to bring the rear rank of the several companies into the front rank, and *vice versa*.

The first captain, head of his class, and one of the ablest scholars at the Academy, was nevertheless a most unpopular man. He had given an order to certain "first class privates" to stop swinging arms, and as the order was not obeyed, he countermarched the battalion to throw these "high privates" in the rear rank.

As soon as the companies wheeled into line in the camp ground at the point where the battalion broke ranks, three cadets rushed at the first captain with swords snatched from the hands of first class officers, and simultaneously attacked him, the captain defending himself but retreating as he did so to the guard tents, and calling "Turn out the guard; turn out the guard." As the captain was a skillful swordsman, he parried the thrusts of his antagonists and held them off until the commandant of cadets rushed in and quelled the disturbance.

No such mutiny as this had ever before, or has ever since, occurred at the Military Academy. The men engaged in the assault were, of course, dismissed by sentence of court-martial; but, under the then existing state of affairs, were soon after reinstated.

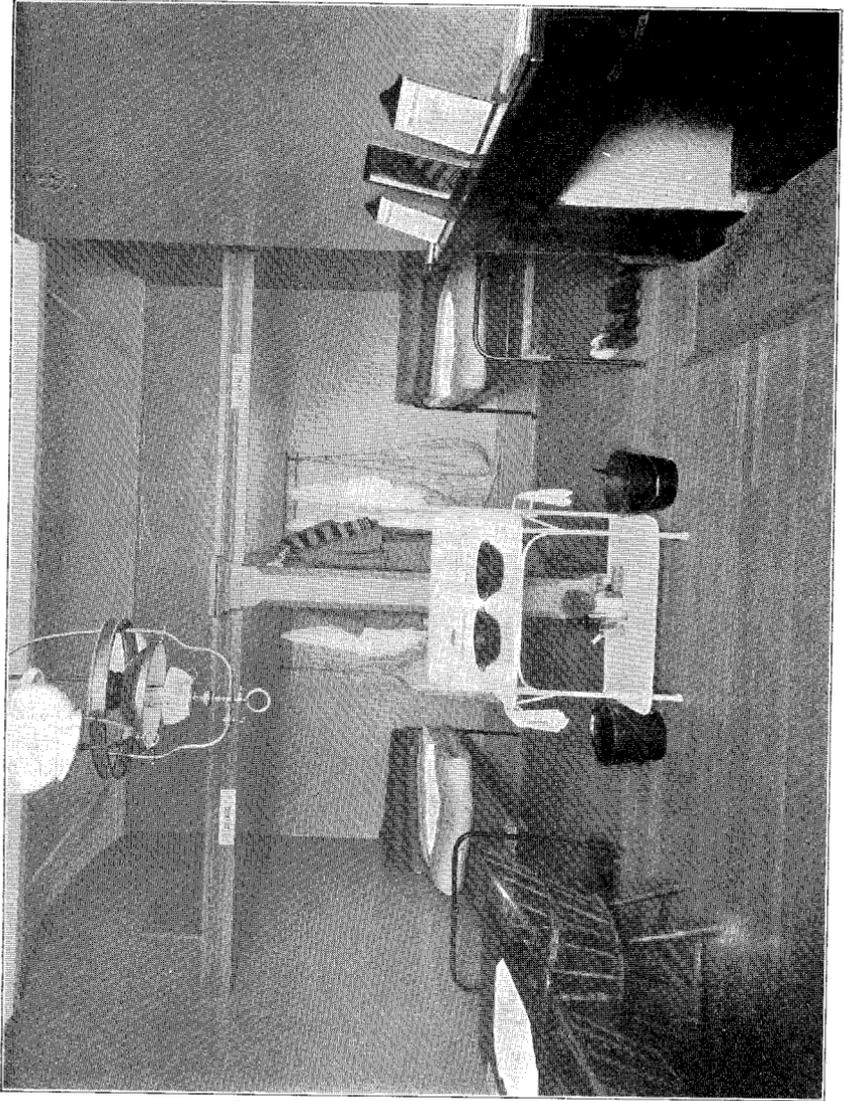
The plebe sentinels were so demoralized that they failed to "*Turn out the guard,*" as they should have done. The writer being of this number was promised trial by the court-martial convened to try the principal offenders, but, fortunately for the plebes, this threat was but a joke (something to laugh at when we were well "out of the woods.").

Men in authority have said that "hazing cannot be

effectually stamped out so long as human nature remains as it is." It is clear however that the present superintendent has accomplished more than any of his predecessors in this matter, since the people of the country have been in entire accord with him, and more than all, he has been fully sustained by those high in authority.

Statutory provisions have in past years been enacted to check the practice of hazing at the Academy at Annapolis; but of this Park Benjamin, a graduate of that institution, and now a well-known writer, says: "It essays to crush butterflies with the steam hammer. It virtually substitutes slaughter for spanking. It is of questionable constitutionality, because it apparently deprives the Executive of his reviewing power, or of his power of pardoning; and for this reason," he goes on to say, "President Cleveland literally evaded it, by refusing to dismiss cadets convicted under it, and restored them to duty after a short confinement."

For those who have been disposed to criticise the administration of the Military Academy at any time, we must say, with "Life," "that its standards are high; that to speak the truth is essential to comfort there; that there is no influence against religion, and that high character is as much appreciated there as at any institution in the country. The question may be asked, will any detraction heaped upon this institution incline prudent parents to keep their sons away? Not a bit!" Congressmen charged with the responsibility of the selection of candidates for the Academy generally prefer at the present day to open wide the door to all



CADET ROOM.

comers under the now quite general system of competitive examination, and presumably, weight should be, if it is not, given by the examining boards to the moral attributes of the youthful aspirants, so that the service in this way may be provided with a gentlemanly class of men — “gentlemen not so much as respects wealth or social pretension, but as regards that undeniable quality of manhood which is the basis of character. The blood in a horse will show itself even though he is hitched to a butcher’s cart; and it will reveal itself in a man, however lowly his estate.”*

Modification of the rules of testimony at the Academy has effected a radical change of late years, since the cadet can now no longer constitute himself the judge of what question he will or will not answer, as was the case for so many past years.

Nor can men under the rules of military discipline make for themselves regulations which they will or will not obey at pleasure.

Indeed, it has been said that the cadet defense for hazing, or “bracing” more particularly, is that when this is done away with, the military bearing of the cadet cannot be preserved.

The authorities of the Academy, on the other hand, contend that matters of this kind can well be provided for under the military system of the Academy, and for this reason “they have abolished the class organizations which as an *imperium in imperio* tended to pervert that unity of organization and that directness of responsibility which are essential to the very idea of military gov-

* Editor of the Army and Navy Journal.

ernment." Even the older graduates of the Academy are brought into line, at this hour, and agree that the system can no longer be tolerated, though many practical jokes were in past years enjoyed by the victims, quite as much as by the perpetrators. In fact some have gone so far as to advocate a well-ordered system of "hazing." By way of illustration let these remarks be applied to guard duty or the sentinel as viewed from a humorous as well as serious standpoint. The sentinel of course always takes himself seriously, and is rarely, if ever, in a joking mood. Probably for this reason more than any other, from the very perversity of human nature he is deviled — just as we devil the crab, because it is *our* fun and not the crab's.

On what line then should we (all of us, not even excepting the investigators and lawmakers themselves) expect the "hazing" of plebes at the Government academies to run, if not on the line of the sentinel's post. All of us, of course, respect the flag, the Nation's ensign. Then, why not the sentinel, the Nation's ward? And yet that we do not, cannot be denied.

It is all one, whether that sentinel clad in the uniform of the United States Army was shot down at the gate of deserted Moultrie or whether the ensign halyard was shot away from the staff at Sumter. In either case the insult was to the Nation itself, and in either event the word comes back and with no uncertain sound, "Hands off!"

Why should the sentinel at the "sally port" stop a free and independent citizen and inquire his business? "What business has he with my business?" says the

citizen? "What's he here for anyhow? If he wants fighting why doesn't he go to the Philippines and get it? Here everything is peace and quiet — what's the use of a soldier anyhow if he isn't where there's fighting?"

Yes, this is the usual remark. But what is the real essence of this matter? Does not the civilian know he has no right whatever within the gate of a military post? He has parted with his right for a consideration — that, namely, of being protected in the enjoyment of his property by the military. In one instance it appeared that the property in question was a number of golf shoes and the sentinel's business to see that no member of the club slipped away with two pairs of shoes, one pair on his feet and the other in his pocket, leaving a rival to go over the course in his stocking feet.*

All are not however ignorant of the uses and advantages of a sentinel. Even a verdant youth of but eight summers sometimes knows better than the man of larger experience. We (an officer and a youth) are passing a sentinel's post — down comes the musket with a rattling present; the salute is returned. "Uncle," the little fellow inquires, "doesn't that make you *feel very proud?*"

Numerous stories are told of poor mortals dressed up in soldier clothes and vested for the time being with authority to command kings and potentates should they trespass upon the sentinel's prerogatives, and here is a *true* story.

A son of Erin representing as he did, for *this* occasion, one of the aforesaid class, was serving as a mem-

*The canteen is abolished, but "Golf" still holds sway in the Army.

ber of the guard at an army post and for the first time. To all challenges the answer came promptly: "Friend," or "Friends with the countersign." All went smoothly and according to formula until a young couple happened along, quite unused to being addressed in this summary way. No answer to the challenge. Again, "Who goes there?" Still no answer. "Answer! answer!" yelled the sentinel — "Say something! Say frind or say foe, but for God's sake *say something!*"

But how far away from West Point are we wandering and nothing as yet said relative to the details of the guard system at that post.

In the first place, there is issued each day a small triangular form of note, the "countersign" and "parole" for the night; usually the name of some battle as countersign conjoined with that of some hero of the day, as parole. The story as we have it comes down in regular sequence of years and shows how the ladies sometime possess themselves of family secrets. Lieutenant Washington, a tactical officer serving at the Academy, "fair, fat, and forty-five," met a party of young ladies "on the old north stoop," who requested the Lieutenant to inform them concerning the "countersign" and "parole." A messenger was dispatched to camp grounds with a note for the officer of the guard, but he was intercepted and the note did not reach its destination; however, the usual form of reply was prepared and dispatched to Lieutenant Washington and passed, unread by him, to the young ladies who in silence but smilingly read — Countersign, "Fatted;" parole, "Calf."

Let us further consider the subject of guard duty as practiced at the Military Academy. "Boning* standing;" "Boning demerit;" "Boning corporalcy" should be understood if they are not, but "boning colors" requires elucidation. The guard as "marched on" during the summer encampment consists of three reliefs of eight men each, two hours on, and four hours off, for each relief. The regular posts at the time of which we write were eight in number, with a color line consisting of stacked muskets and the colors of the battalion; this line being preserved from morning parade until near the time for evening parade, guarded by extra sentinels, three in number, posted alternately.

These privileged members of the guard had "boned colors," and their efforts were successful. Each day the three of the twenty-seven members of the privates of the guard were selected by the adjutant, for neat appearance and military bearing, after being subjected to a crucial test. Failing to determine the three meriting selection on appearances, some six or more would be ordered to "*fall out*," by the adjutant, and be put through a severe ordeal in the manual of arms, wrong commands being purposely given at intervals. The impulse to do *something* at word of command was often almost irresistible, and men trembling with excitement in their efforts to attain the honor or privilege sought for on the color guard would move, or by some slight motion start to execute that which was not prescribed in tactics. The three men selected for the color guard were simply required to walk post two or

* Striving for, or endeavoring to escape from a thing.

three hours, and after that, were treated as on general permit, were excused from all duty, and allowed to range about the post as they pleased.

Following the posting of the regular sentinels, orders and instructions of a purposely complicated character were given. How to receive "Grand Rounds;" how to receive a body of cavalry if friends, and how to receive them if enemies; which latter method consisted in fleeing from one's post, firing one's piece and calling out in retreat: "Turn out the guard! turn out the guard! body of the enemy's cavalry!" If one were a plebe and a steamboat arrived on his post, in like manner and in all seriousness the officers of the guard gave instructions as to how it should be received. If at night, the pilot would be required "to dismount from the pilot-house and advance with the countersign." If at some other hour a different method of receiving the craft was prescribed.

Now all this may seem superfluous, but as the great General Winfield Scott said before election (and it killed him politically): "Everything is done with a view to soup" ("A hasty plate of soup" is the way the Democrats had it); and these stories are told for a specific purpose, that of demonstrating that there is more business for the sentinel, more especially for the *plebe* sentinel, than the casual observer might suppose, and none of a plebe class can say, with any degree of truth after a summer camp spent in the manner described, that he has not seen active service.

If those of a very practical turn of mind should ask, How can a steamboat traverse a sentry post? the query

can be answered in a few words. It is only a theoretical steamboat, a theoretical body of the enemy's cavalry, represented at one time, by a new-fledged "yearling" just out of plebdom and at another by a dignified cadet officer who desires to see if the sentinel can keep his wits about him and remember his orders. Remember his orders! No sentinel in time of war, on the very picket line itself, has such a stack of orders to remember and none are ever advanced upon by such scarecrows and hobgoblins as are the (excuse us!), as *were* the plebe sentinels of our day. If gentlemen who take up arms for a brief period, in the service of their country, were put through a course of West Point guard duty for a single night, or better still, for a single week, when the "Grand Rounds" approaches, the order of things would never be reversed; in other words, the sentinel would not fire his piece first and challenge afterward; as many well remember was the case with "the three months men" of the early sixties, when officers "took their lives in their hands" in making the "Grand Rounds."

In fact, the following story might have been lost to the reader had it not been for certain omissions in our military system:

The late Hon. William D. Kelly, from Pennsylvania, a member of the Board of Visitors of late years, related *his* experience in the line of sentinel duty.

His story was told at one of the West Point alumni banquets. He "was not used to the Military," as he explained, and had been "put on post" at General Reynolds's house near Gettysburg, with orders that if any one asked to see General Reynolds, he was to ascer-

tain his name and business and then send the orderly to tell the General who the party was desiring to see him. Then (the instructions were explicit), if the General told the orderly to return and tell the sentinel that he would see the party, the sentinel could send the party in.

The first man who came along was Governor Curtin, of Pennsylvania, who asked to see General Reynolds. "Governor Curtin," replied the sentinel (Mr. Kelly, as he tells it), "you cannot see the General unless I send the orderly to tell the General you wish to see him; then if the General tells the orderly to tell me that you can see him, I'll let you in."

"Go ahead," says the Governor, "and send the orderly."

"Orderly," said I (Sentinel Kelly is speaking), "go and tell General Reynolds that Governor Curtin desires to see him."

"I have no orders to receive from a d—n private," replied the orderly.

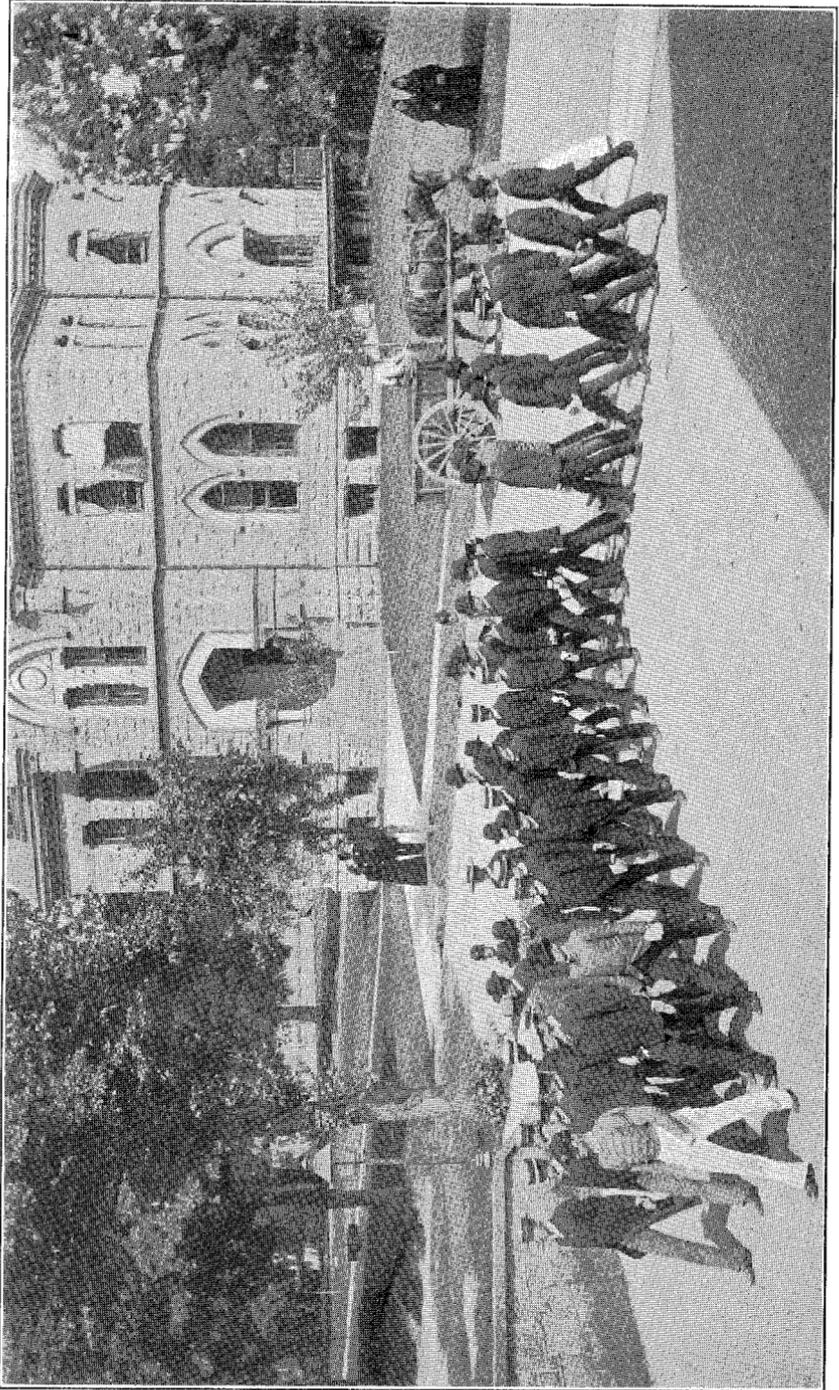
"Governor Curtin, you cannot see the General," said the sentinel. "Why not?" replied the Governor.

"The orderly won't go."

"But I must see him."

"Well, then, Governor, suppose you try *your* hand on the orderly."

The orderly was sent, and, as Mr. Kelly relates, General Reynolds came to the door, received the Governor, and after a few words they both looked at the sentinel; the General then addressed the officer of the day with this remark, "Take that d—n fool off that post!"



SANDWICH DAY.

Here was a man who did not belong to the Regular Army. He was simply a member of the Pennsylvania reserves, called out to repel invaders of his State; had been in the service but one week, and yet, as he said, he saw more active service in that one tour of guard duty than in all the rest of his service put together.

A Russian soldier posted by the Neva side at the season of the annual river rising was rescued just in time — the icy water was up to his armpits.

It is not doubted that such incidents were common. There was in all probability no little boy Casabianca. But what does it matter. The number of souls that the story has fired shows that it is a true thing, fact or no.

One more recital and the poor sentinel may then be allowed to walk his post in peace. This can be vouched for. The writer was passing the gate of the National Armory in Springfield, Mass., in a horse car with "no show of the military" about him.

Two occupants of the car were engaged in earnest conversation condemnatory of the introduction of soldiers at that place. "Look there!" said one; "see that big fellow coming down the hill with another one bringing him along; watch and you will see him leave him and take another one away, and this thing is going on all the time — every few hours. Now I want ter know what's the use on it? Why can't those fellers cum by th'rsel's and go back by th'rsel's and save money and time in the business — that's what I wanter know?" These intelligent (?) citizens of the United States, it is apprehended, had assisted in enacting the law which required that the sentinel should be "*duly posted*" (and in the very manner objected to), so that he might be

empowered to enforce the law. From which it appears that some persons may live a whole lifetime without comprehending the use of a sentinel; whereas, some other one, like the youth of eight summers or the honorable member from Pennsylvania, may find a solution for this question at the very threshold of his military career.

In late readings upon military subjects the views and opinions of military men, based upon what may be called modern contests, are so much at variance with the ordinary or customary teachings* that they forcibly recall an interview had with a sentinel at one of our military posts just after the Civil War. The sentinel was an Italian; he had been several times wounded, and was maimed, but not to any extent disqualified for duty.

“I have been,” he said, “five years in the Army, ‘*Ma lavori militari no ho mai veduto.*’”

He had taken part in the great historical crisis of the age. He had seen victory and defeat, battle and sudden death, but *lavoro militare* forsooth he had never seen.

How many there are who have waded through the pages of history; have studied great campaigns, and have discussed the comparative merits of military leaders, and military systems, and yet have never seen it, never known it, or never understood it—*lavoro militare*.

*“The Germans,” says Sir Charles Dilke in an article on the Armies of the Powers in the April number of “Munsey’s Magazine,” “are not a martial people. But their perfect *study and practice of things military* make them probably the most formidable fighting power of the world.”

Presumably what this man meant, was that he had been in battle, but it was not *done right*.

The rules were not followed. Europe was not taken as a model. There was victory but not victory brought about by faithfulness to precedent. There was defeat, but the performance was irregular. He had been wounded many times, it is true, but wounds have no business to be inflicted in such a way. I grant you, he seemed to say, a terrific struggle and results which guide the course of history. But the whole thing was a mere scramble. It was not military.

The man had eyes and saw not — ears and heard not. “*Multum reluctans*” he was struggling not to be dragged out of the dark ages into the light of the nineteenth century.

A man like that cannot take it in that a set of men of one temper is to be treated in one way, and another set of another temper quite differently.

Take two stories, neither of which is likely to be fact, but none the less on that account true.

The Czar Nicholas I was stopped by a sentinel on post and made to wait until the corporal of the guard came. The sentinel next morning was sent for to the palace, rewarded, and promoted. He had obeyed orders.

The King of Prussia, Frederic William II, was stopped by a sentinel on post and made to wait until the corporal of the guard came. The sentinel next morning was sent for to the palace, reprimanded, and punished. A Prussian soldier must know his King by sight.

The Russian soldier is a stolid peasant, a mere mass of matter, that has not two consecutive ideas. It is as much as ever if he can understand the literal meaning of an order and all he can do to obey it. If once motion be initiated, if he conceive the idea of unpunished disobedience in the slightest degree, the string will break, the beads be scattered all over the place, the whole army system be disintegrated.

The Prussian soldier was, fifty years ago, and is now to a much more marked extent taken from a class of a wholly different temper. He is held responsible for mind and the use of it.

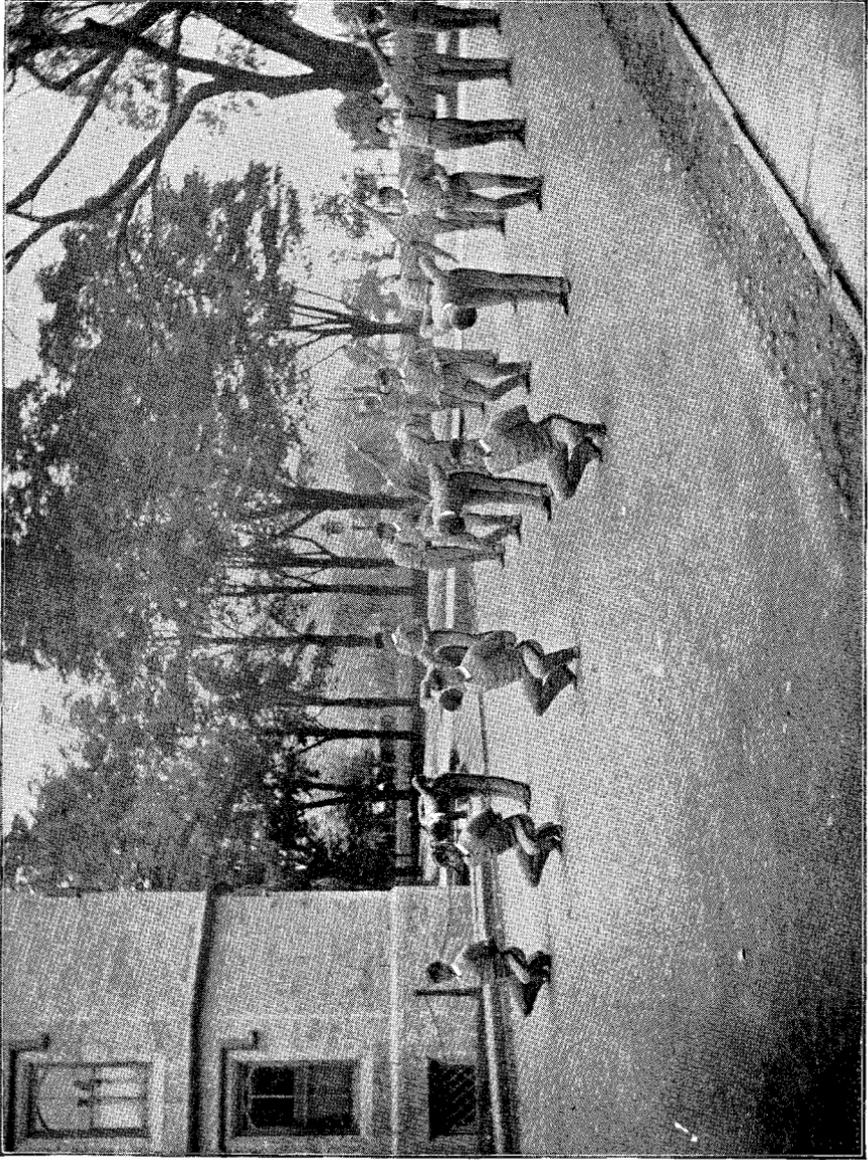
Now, when all this has been set before the Italian private's mind, the next thing is to have him understand (not so very difficult) and acknowledge (a different thing altogether) that the way in which the Slav was treated was quite right and the course pursued with the Teuton by no means wrong.

When one reports to a sentinel "duly posted" according to law and regulations, he reports to Congress.

The sentinel is the Senate and Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled, not a callow cadet or a feather-brained recruit.

The soldier must, if he mean to keep his oath, take his life in his hand, as well in his sentry box and on his post as in the powder smoke and under the feet of the trooper's horse.

That story of the Roman sentry at the gate of Pompeii may not be as much a fact as a true thing, and another true thing is this: the sentinel, be he plebe, old cadet, Congressman, or even the President himself, will always be bedeviled.



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"SETTING-UP" DRILL.

Stoddard, Glens Falls, N. Y.

CHAPTER III

“LET THE PUNISHMENT FIT THE CRIME”

PROF. E. S. HOLDEN, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, in his article in the October* number of the “Cosmopolitan,” invites attention to subjects which, at this time, should be of interest to the general public. There are two schools which are, he tells us, “based upon the methods of nature;” the one at West Point and the other at Annapolis. We may not quote him literally, but in words to this effect:

After thousands upon thousands of experiences, a child comes to recognize that the forces of nature are not, as at first supposed, capricious and unjust—not capricious, whatever else they may be, but uniform, consistent, inexorable, and immediate.

Where, if not at the United States Military Academy, the Professor inquires, shall we find a system in which the rewards and punishments are the certain and immediate sequence of the act?

Here, at this institution, are appointed annually from every congressional district in the country, candidates who are entirely representative in character, of good health, and familiar with the ordinary studies of the grammar school; youths between the ages of 17 and 22, who represent every class in society from rich to

* 1900.

poor. Side by side stand the lads who have had the most delicate moral nurture, or none at all; who are models of truthfulness, or already contrivers of escape from duty and obligations. Every inequality of society is represented in an entering class of cadets. It is necessary to insist upon this point in order to appreciate the results of four years of training.

In a few days after entrance, external inequalities vanish as if by magic. Duties, privileges, dress, rooms, food, all are alike; no one is permitted to have money, or at least to spend it. In a week every sign of external inequality has disappeared. Personal inequalities, of course, there are and necessarily must be.

There is absolutely no favoritism by the instructors. The very corner-stone of the most effective education is the marking system, the immediate consequence of an academic performance, wherein absolute and complete justice is attained. The marks are posted, and each cadet knows what his performance is worth. Frequent recitations, due to a larger proportion of instructors to students than at any other institute, afford an opportunity to thoroughly test each cadet daily, and no failing can possibly be hidden. The effect on the character of the student is immediate and admirable.

Here there can be no shirking of duty, and every shortcoming in the course of the day is sure to bring its corresponding penalty. There is no moment when the cadet does not fully understand that his performance of duty now will influence his whole official career hereafter. This is fully recognized, and its perfect jus-

tice admitted by all. The consequences following actions are certain. Each student is trained in the heathen virtues of fortitude and justice. It is at once his duty and his advantage to be proficient in his academic work.

Now for the system affecting the official character of the cadet — how is his official conduct molded and tested? Again the marking system; the effect following the cause, certain and immediate. ‘Late at roll call’ carries one demerit; ‘absent,’ ten; ‘slight untidiness in dress,’ one; ‘inattention,’ to duty or at drill, five; and so on.

There are eighteen thousand opportunities during four years, at each one of which the duty of punctuality is emphasized — one demerit each. One hundred demerits in six months insure dismissal. Every one knows this. There is no talking; only simple laws are prescribed, and each one of them is just. The final result is like the result of gravitation — inevitable, inexorable, just, and immediate.

The conditions stimulate official conduct and there is a standard of personal honor kept up among the cadets themselves. A liar or coward is shunned by all his comrades, and a student guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman has his connection with the Army at once cut short.

From what has gone before,* it may be seen that the system presented by Professor Holden, and which is enforced at the Military Academy, possesses advantages that no other can supply. The moral obligation en-

* Introduced in these pages with the consent of the Professor.

tered into, and which transforms the man in a single day or hour, is the oath of office administered, an obligation paramount, immediate, and continuous.

At a conference of the head master of the great English public schools one of the speakers severely arraigned the traditional educational methods the schools were forced to employ in order to pass boys as officers into the service. A military correspondent of "The Pall Mall Gazette," criticising the Sandhurst and Woolwich methods, declares the British authorities admit that West Point is in advance of anything in England. He describes the democratic and severely competitive system in vogue there, saying: "Education at West Point is serious thoroughness rather than an extension of attainments. Its principle is controlling education, together with the knowledge of how to make use of it. Like all exceptionally good education, it is enormously costly, perhaps the most expensive in the world. But in many ways it is said to be by far the best. An exhaustive comparison of West Point with our own military colleges, as educational mediums, is to the disadvantage of our institutions."

It has long been a mooted question whether the class grading of cadets at the time they leave the Academy should be accepted as evidence of ability that shall determine success in after-life. It is certain that at no other institution in the country is "class standing" such an accurate gauge of *scholarly* attainments in the course of study pursued, as at the United States Military and Naval Academies. There are however nu-

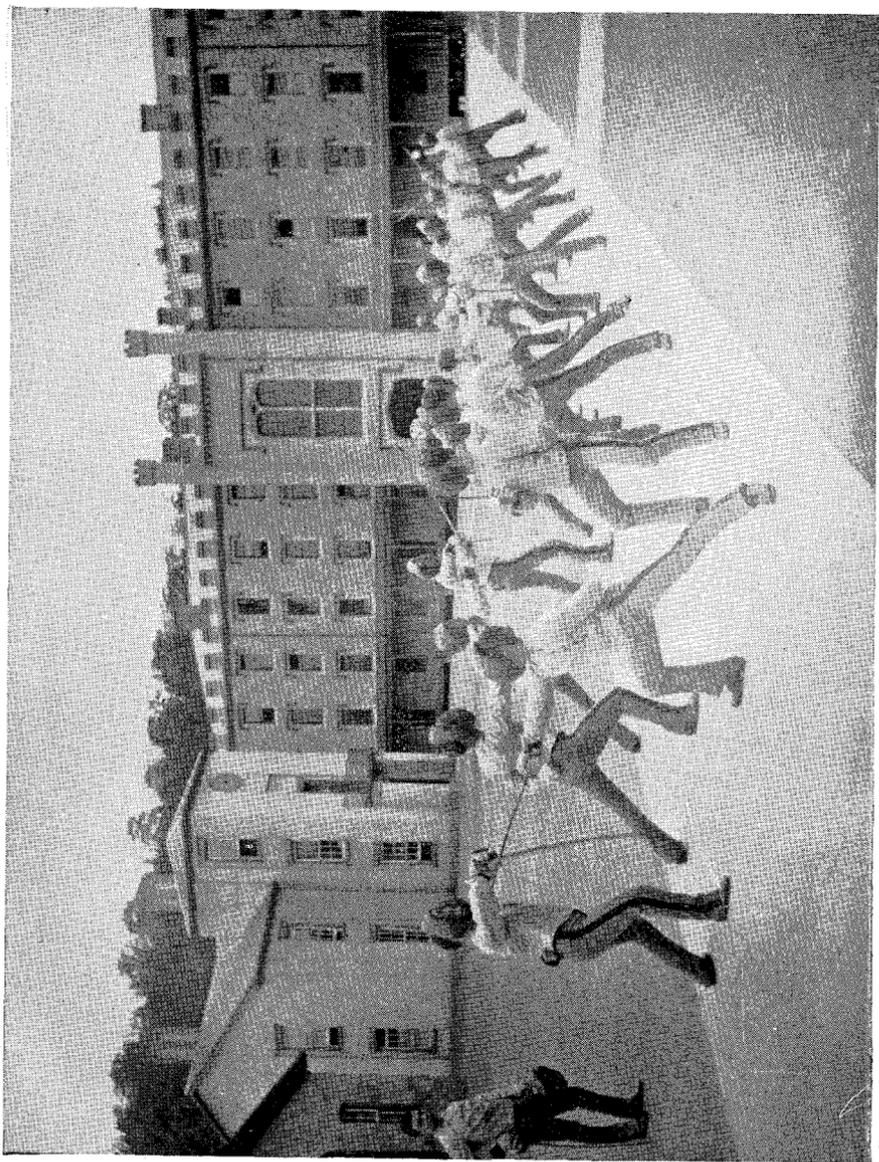
merous instances where, if the course of study were more extended in point of time, the ultimate grading of class members would be materially altered.

It is well understood that at all institutions of learning — Government academies and common or high schools excepted — the best scholars and the cleverest men do not “put their best foot foremost” as cadets are compelled to do. In fact, under the marking system at the national institutions, which is the basis of class standing, the grading secured determines for the cadet an assignment to that arm of the service which he may prefer, the chances for preferment being commensurate with his rating under this system.

In this connection an interesting case may be presented;— that of Patrick O’Rorke, who was born in Ireland, his parents both dying on the voyage to this country. Upon the arrival of the ship which brought O’Rorke to our shores, he was taken to an orphan asylum, where, at the age of 12, his intelligence was found to be of such high order that educational advantages commensurate with his ability were offered him, of which he was not slow to avail himself. As long ago, then, as the year 1857, he was appointed a cadet to the Military Academy. The writer had not at any time the good fortune to be his roommate when “in barracks,” but became his tentmate during our “second class camp.”

This was at the period of a presidential campaign when the father of one of our classmates (“John” —) was then a candidate for the high office.

A newspaper clipping was forwarded to O'Rorke, in which his merits were applauded, but rather more as a foil or in a spirit of detraction of good "Old John," as we were wont to call him. It was here argued that a boy born of immigrant parents reared in an orphan asylum could attain under the impartial system of the Academy the highest honors of his class, and it was also shown that the son of an influential citizen, a candidate for the highest office in the land, with a backing which should determine for him some degree of favoritism, was so near the foot of his class that he was in imminent danger of being "found deficient" in his studies or else dismissed for demerit at the then next ensuing semi-annual examination. "Pat's" permission to show the clipping to some of the "fellows" was asked, but he instantly tore the paper into small bits, and replied, "That would never do; it would hurt poor John's feelings." As a further illustration of the instincts of this man, he was heard to remark at another time, that when he entered the Military Academy he felt some degree of apprehension lest he should be unequal to the social requirements of an army officer, lacking, as he did, home training and home influence. Accordingly, he said, he had made it his best endeavor, while at the Academy, to note the bearing of men in the class who were better favored by circumstances than he had been. For reasons such as these, "Pat" O'Rorke was beloved not only by members of his own class, but by all others at the institution. He was regarded by officers, as well as by cadets, as



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FENCING AT WILL.

Stoddard, Glens Falls, N. Y.

a model man, and when on one occasion he was asked to draw lots with another of the class, less popular than himself, for the highest honor, he declined to do so upon the ground that “the lot had already been determined in favor of his rival; the latter having held above him in the previous year.” He was compelled however to accede to the Academic Board’s decision, and drew the lucky straw, amidst the rejoicings of the entire Corps of Cadets.

Not long after this, at artillery drill, the No. 4, serving as cannoneer, jerked the lanyard prematurely and fired the rammer through O’Rorke’s hands, when he O’Rorke, was acting as No. 1 in the gun detachment. Fortunately O’Rorke had but a moderate grip upon the rammer staff at the time, and although his gauntlet was dragged off, his arm did not go along with it. The indignation expressed at a called meeting of the class was such as would probably have compelled the resignation of the careless cadet, had the accident resulted more seriously.

Two instances have occurred at the Military Academy in the course of artillery drill, where the right arm of the cannoneer was torn off. In one case the man died. In the other, the victim survived; to be allowed, after graduation, to go upon the retired list with the rank of second lieutenant. The cadet, who, in this latter case, was the cause of the disability of his classmate, was, comparatively speaking, a wealthy man, and settled upon his maimed associate a sum sufficient to compen-

sate in some measure for the consequences of his carelessness.

The junior class of 1861 had marked as the future Commander of the Army of the United States this man O'Rorke, who, had he been spared, would probably have justified the class prevision. Shortly after graduation, he was appointed colonel of a volunteer regiment from the State of New York, and fell, mortally wounded, at the head of his regiment at the battle of Gettysburg.

It is admittedly true that "it is difficult to guard against a lack of home training in young men chosen with a democratic disregard of this prerequisite, but who are, in the highest sense, gentlemen; gentlemen not merely in the matter of familiarity with the usages of good society, but in the large sense of the term."* Taking this as a text, the case of Cushing, equally with that of O'Rorke, comes well within the scope of these remarks.

U. S. Grant and Jefferson Davis, graduates of exactly the same grading and in classes of nearly the same strength, furnish good illustrations of the capabilities of the "middle-man" of the class.

Longstreet, Lee's lieutenant and corps commander, is another instance of the middleman who counseled his Chief, the second man of another class, to countermand the order directing the charge of Pickett at Gettysburg, a charge which resulted so disastrously for the Confederate cause. Longstreet not only evinced better

* Editor of Army and Navy Journal.

judgment than his superior on this occasion, but his inconsistency, it has been said, came very near costing him deposition* from command of his corps.

Brig.-Gen. E. P. Alexander, C. S. A., class 1857, states that “in conversation with Colonel Ives of President Davis’s staff, during a ride along the lines, I asked his estimate of Lee. His reply was impressive; stopping his horse and turning to face me, he said: ‘Lee is the most audacious officer in either Army, Confederate or Federal; he will fight quicker and longer and take more desperate chances than any general this country has ever seen and you will live to see it.’”†

Certain it is that on no less than two occasions (at Chancellorsville and before the second battle of Bull Run), Lee divided his inferior force in the presence of one greatly its superior, and it was solely due to his lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson, that these operations were successful, the hazard being far greater than conditions warranted.

In referring to this question of class standing at the Military Academy the few special cases cited simply go to show that in the soldier’s profession scholarship is not everything, but as preferment is given the men who graduate highest in their classes at the Military Academy, and they are usually assigned to the scientific branches of the service, it is to be expected that in time of peace men afforded such advantages should, as a rule, profit by them.

* This writer does not credit this statement, as Longstreet, like “Stonewall” Jackson, was indispensable to Lee.

It has for this reason always been considered a matter of the first importance at the Military Academy for the cadet to attain the best possible class standing.

There was a day, as long ago as 1839, when the Military Academy was bitterly assailed, for the reason that in the matter of appointees influential elements of society were propitiated to a too great degree. The opposition to the Academy at that time may perhaps have been well taken, and it had evidently crystallized in the day of Grant, who in his writings says: "Early in the session of the Congress which met in December, 1839, a bill was discussed abolishing the Military Academy. I saw in this an honorable way to obtain my discharge, and read the debates with much interest, but with impatience at the delay in taking action, as I was selfish enough to favor the bill. It never passed; and a year later, although the time hung drearily with me, I would have been sorry to have seen it succeed." Had this bill passed at that time it is safe to conclude that the following remarks could not have been made by Clayton,* (one of the investigators of the Military Academy,) in a recent congressional debate: "I cannot forget that from that Academy on the Northern side came Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, and McClellan, and on the Southern side, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and the two Johnstons. These men probably had

*The Hon. Bertram T. Clayton, class of 1886, son of Maj.-Gen. H. D. Clayton, C. S. A.

their boyish pranks; they had their hazings and their ‘straights’ like other boys;” and here let us add, in the words of Judith Hawes: “Sad pickles though they may be, boys such as these make the best and bravest men.”

“An old man of the village saw the boy Clive astride of a gargoye far up and outside the church tower: “Ah!” he muttered, shaking his head, “That ’ere Bobby Clive, he’ll never come to no good.”

CHAPTER IV

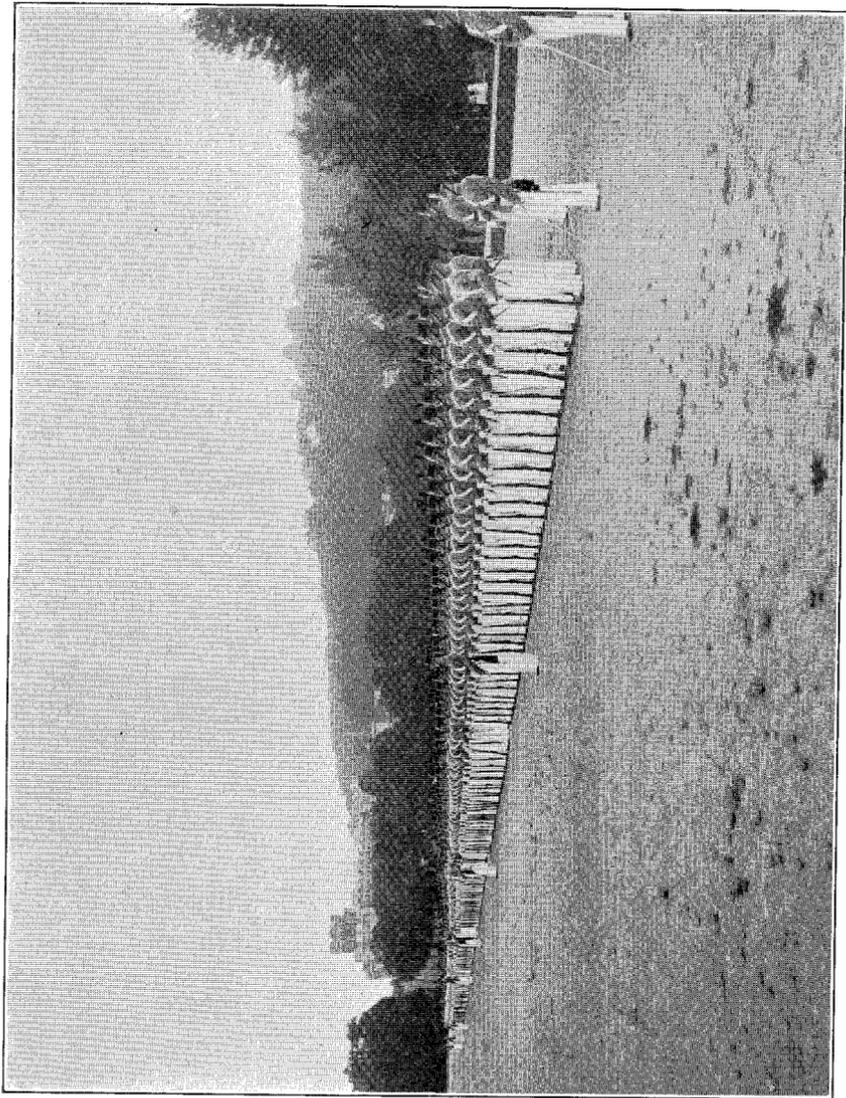
OUR INSTRUCTORS

THE professors of our day were Mahan (engineering), Bartlett (philosophy), Church (mathematics), Kendrick (chemistry, mineralogy, and geology), Weir (drawing), French (chaplain, ethics), Agnel (French), De Jañon (Spanish).

“Old Dad” (Kendrick) was present at the siege of Vera Cruz, and took an active part in the battles of Cerro Gordo and Amazoque. He was brevetted major for gallant and meritorious conduct in the defense of Puebla, and preferred always to be addressed as Major rather than Professor.

His house was open to the cadets on Saturday afternoons, and being a bachelor he was able to entertain them after his own notions. These conditions may be more fully appreciated when we say that Sherman and Sheridan and all the other “jolly boys” “put up” at the Major’s quarters whenever they visited the post.

As the story goes, an old army officer, one of the early temperance advocates, called upon the Major at a time when he was absent from home. The old lady housekeeper, lowering her voice, said: “Walk in, Colonel; the Major told me to tell any one who might call



CADET BATTALION PARADE.

that he would find what he wants on the upper shelf of the closet at the end of the hall."

It was the custom in past years, when any good fellow of a class was "hived," hived drunk; that is, found in condition such as to warrant his being brought to trial before a court-martial, for the class to sign a pledge, to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors during the remainder of their term at the Academy, in order to save the unfortunate from dismissal. Our class, at that time being "on pledge," knew full well where to go on Saturday afternoons, the afternoon the cadets had permission to visit on the post. The Major invariably inquired of those who sat around his board, "May I help the members of the second class to peaches (peaches amply supplied with liquor preservative)?" and as the second class could not drink, why not eat? and eat as all total abstinence people do, eat intemperately; "whip the devil around the stump?"

Our commandant at the time was John F. Reynolds, with the local rank of lieutenant-colonel, and the other officers of the Department of Tactics were: Alexander McD. McCook, Lieutenant, Second Infantry; Charles W. Field, Lieutenant, Second Cavalry; Robert Williams, Lieutenant, First Dragoons; Fitzhugh Lee, Lieutenant, Second Cavalry, and Charles Griffin, Lieutenant, Second Artillery, the latter officer transferring with the West Point Battery to Washington City early in the year 1861.

Griffin had earned no sobriquet at the hands of the

cadets and the same may be said of our commandant, Reynolds; but McCook was frequently called "A. McD;" Field, "Charley;" Williams, "Bully," and Fitzhugh Lee, "Fitz."

General Reynolds was killed July 1, 1863, aged 42. "Being in command of the engaged forces at the opening of the battle of Gettysburg, and while urging his men with animating words, he was struck with a rifle-shot that caused almost instant death, a grievous loss to the Army of the Potomac, one of whose most distinguished and best beloved officers he was; one whom, by the steady growth of the highest military qualities, the general voice of the Army had marked out for the largest fame."

Captain Reynolds had been brevetted captain and major for gallant and meritorious conduct at the battles of Monterey and Buena Vista. The remaining tactical officers, when serving on the Plains, had engaged in many Indian contests and had done good service, though not requited by brevets. The law distinctly requires that brevets shall not be bestowed except in time of war; and the contests in which our little Army was engaged on the Frontier for so many long years, the most hazardous of all warfare, were, as determined by revised statutes, not to be so classed. Those who fell in conflicts with the Indians were men who passed quietly from their classes at the Academy to the Western wilds, returning — if ever again — to their Alma Mater for final interment in the West Point Cemetery.* The battle monument which now rears its

shaft near Trophy Point bears not even on its panels the names of these unsung heroes, as its specific aim is to commemorate only the names of those who, as officers and soldiers of the Regular Army, were killed in battle during the Civil War.

It was hard enough for those who were left at the Military Academy in the winter and spring of 1861 to part with their comrades from the South. But suddenly, in the same month in which the first class was graduated, Reynolds, Griffin, McCook, Williams, Field, and Lee, all the "Tac's," departed from the Academy for active service. Field and Lee became distinguished leaders in the Confederate States service. Williams, although a Virginian by birth and affiliation, remained loyal to the Union and commanded the First Massachusetts Cavalry, with the same energy and zeal that he had ever displayed at the Military Academy as instructor of cavalry tactics. Later he became Adjutant-General, United States Army.

Of Alexander McD. McCook, Major-General, United States Army, retired, so much is known that it needs but to be said that he is much more youthful and spry than many "old fellows," his juniors by many years, who are now verging upon retirement.

Of Fitzhugh Lee also, words are unnecessary. He has fought *for* and *against* us, and all is now forgiven

* "Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored."—*Daniel Webster*.

and forgotten that could in any wise detract from the luster of the star which he wears with so much honor in the strap upon his shoulder. He commanded the company of cadets of which the writer was a member; and "Fitz's" parting words, as, with tears in his eyes and a voice tremulous with emotion, he bade us farewell, left an impression that will not be effaced so long as memory lasts.

The writer found in "Charley" Field* a good, kind friend; and remembers well the overwhelming grief in his family when the time arrived for the former to sever his bond with the United States Army, and take up arms against the flag which he had so often and so valiantly defended. Standing six feet three inches, and cast in the mold of an Adonis, he was probably the finest specimen of manhood that ever passed from out the portals of our Alma Mater. When mounted upon his favorite charger and at the head of the cadet troop, his presence dwarfed all others. The soldierly bearing of this officer and his personal appearance, coupled with a certain recklessness and devil-may-care manner in his training of the cadets in the riding hall, won for him the deepest admiration and affection. In fact, the cadets fairly worshipped him.

And now for "Bully Williams," so well known by this sobriquet as not otherwise to be referred to in these pages. He, too, was a man after the fashion of Field, both in looks and action. A bold sabreur, one to win the heart of any man, or woman either. Indeed, we

* Later Major-General, C. S. A.

apprehend that it was the heart of one of the other sex that earned for Robert Williams his sobriquet. The story, as we cadets had it, relates to "arrows and darts," to "pistols and coffee;" "a bullet through the hat of our "Bully Boy," and "a bullet, in reserve, fired in the air."

Williams' system of instruction and strict discipline struck a fair balance with Field's laxity and recklessness, since without this check we should not have turned out good cavalry soldiers, however well qualified as "rough and tumble" riders we might have been.

Well do we all, members of the 1861 classes, remember "Bully's" method of inviting attention to the principles of navigation for one "at sea" upon a horse. For example, the case of Mithers. (If there is a Mr. Mithers, our remarks need not apply.) "Mr. Mithers, keep your horse off the heels of the horse in front of you." A rebuke from the far end of the riding hall, and a voice to be likened at the present day to that of the megaphone call. "Remember, Mr. Mithers, that 'All that glitters is not gold.'" Mr. Mithers *will not forget it*; nor shall any of us cease to remember the unfathomable gibes and jests of this our "Bully Boy." Or it may be, "Sit up, Mr. Mithers." "Hold your bridle rein properly." "Carry back your legs; *and* remember, Mr. Mithers, that 'A rolling stone gathers no moss.'"

It so happened that on a certain day Mr. Mithers having attained the highest honors in his class in the course of drawing, exchanged as squad leader with

O'Rorke — the alternation daily after January examination being between drawing and riding. Mr. Mithers thus became the leader of the cavalry squad, and *what an honor!* The megaphone now opened with a rattling volley: "Mr. Mithers, the command was 'walk,' not 'trot.'" "Mr. Mithers, the command was 'trot out,' not 'gallop.'" "*Squad, halt!*" "Mr. Mithers and Mr. Custer, "*lead out;*" "*dismount!*" "exchange horses — and now, Mr. Mithers, take your place at the *tail end* of the squad, the place where you properly belong." After further maneuvering, again the command, "*halt!*" coupled with these complimentary observations: "Mr. Mithers, you are afraid of your horse." (*Afraid of his horse!* Well might any cadet, even "Fitz" himself, be afraid of "Quaker.") "Mr. Mithers, such conduct as this will do very well for *a lady's boudoir*, but when it comes to dealing with men, it won't do, sir; *it won't do!*" At this juncture it would not be fair to Lieutenant Williams to leave unrecognized an idea which the lapse of many years has slowly evolved from the depths of our inner consciousness.

Turn to Richard Third and in the very first speech find words which throw broad light upon a matter full of poise and difficulty:

— "instead of mounting barbed steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute."

If Lieutenant Williams really meant that Mithers was better fitted to caper nimbly in a lady's chamber (bou-